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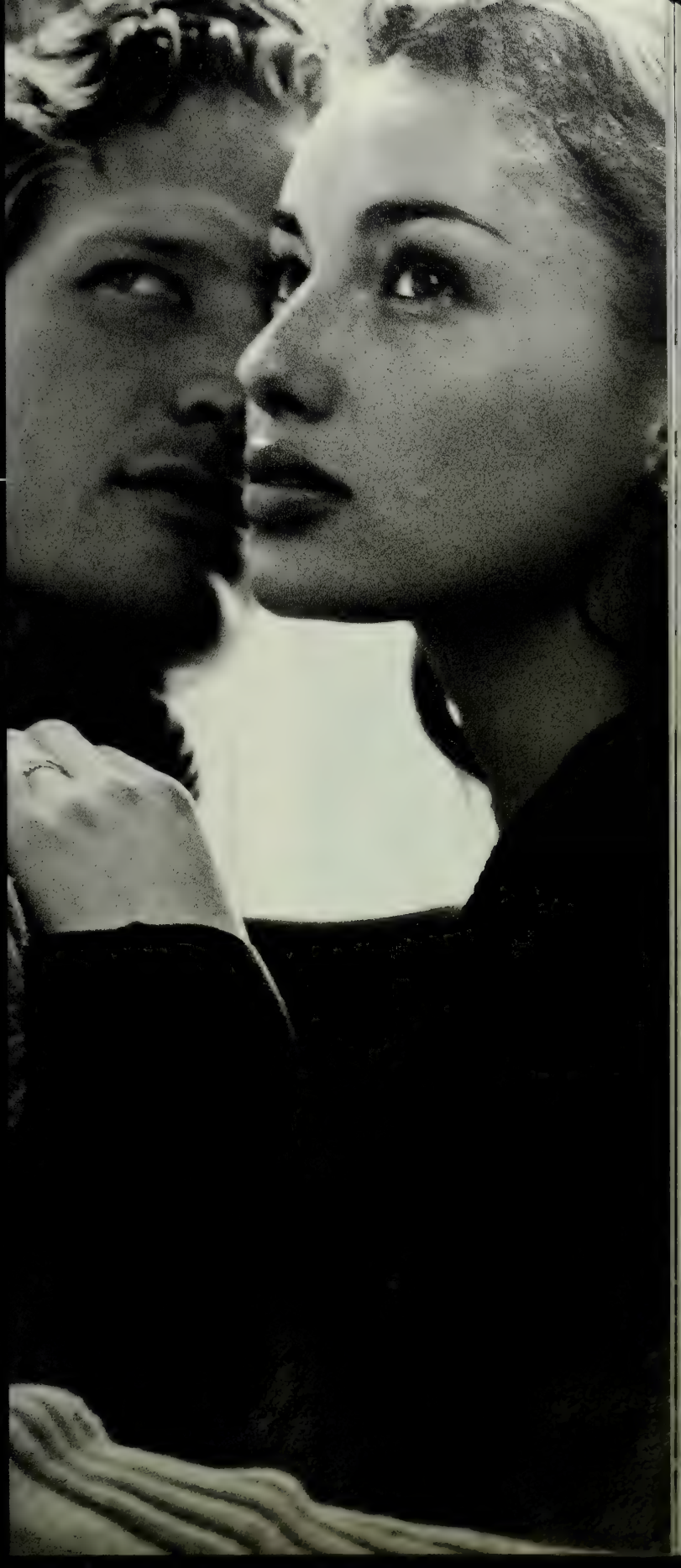
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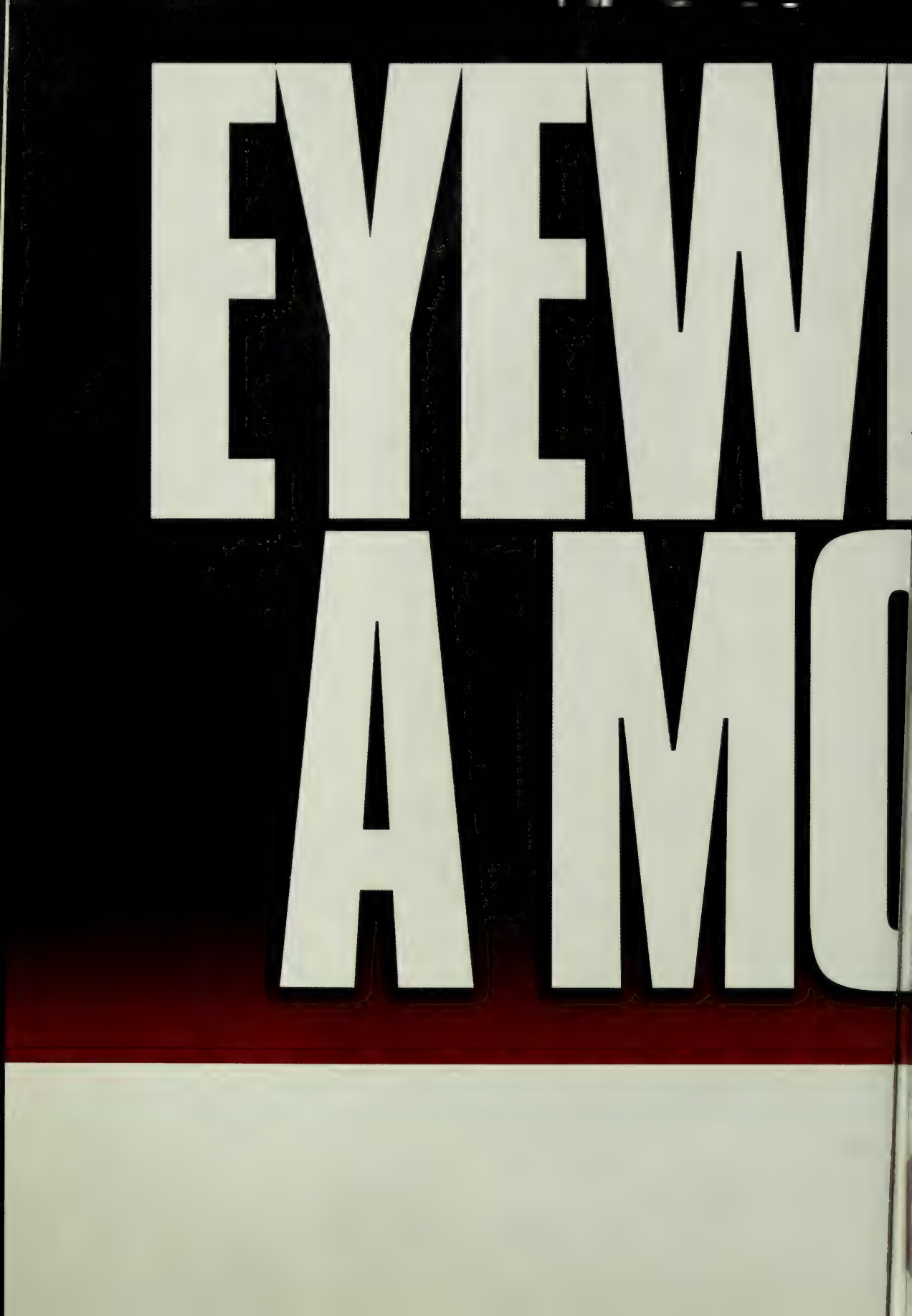
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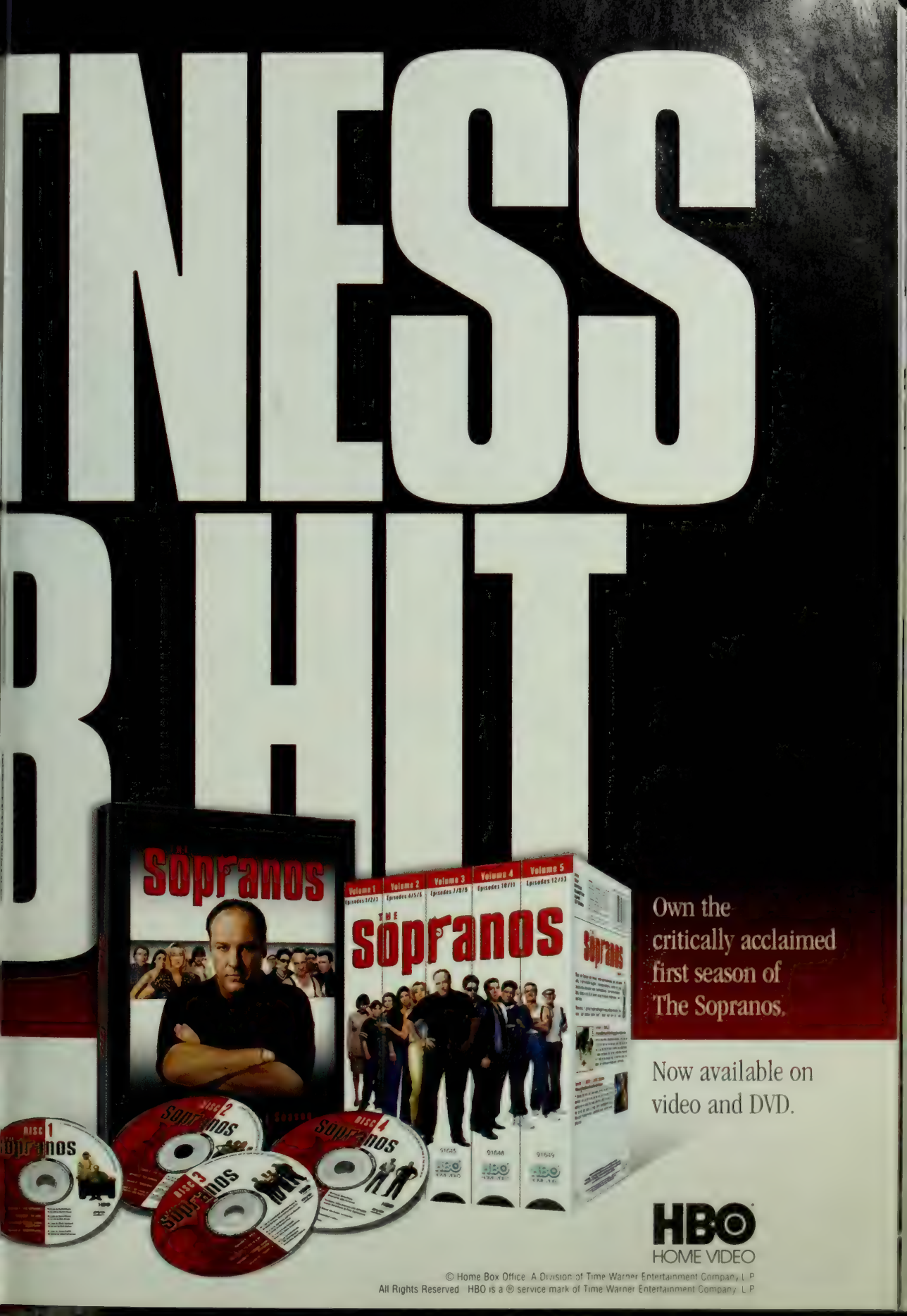
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VANITY FAIR

January 2001 No. 48

Features

GLAMOUR, WITHOUT APOLOGIES
Catherine Zeta-Jones's unabashed sexiness caught the attention of Hollywood—and of Michael Douglas. Now the "black Welsh" beauty and new mother stars with her husband in Steven Soderbergh's *Traffic*. Leslie Bennetts finds there's one thing missing from Zeta-Jones's childhood dream: an Oscar of her own. Photographs by Mario Testino 8

THE COUNTERFEIT ROCKEFELLER Under various identities, Christopher Rocancourt allegedly conned new "friends" out of millions, from Bangkok to Los Angeles. Then he hit the Hamptons as a Rockefeller, which led the F.B.I. to his trail. Bryan Burrough provides a portrait of the audacious grifter 9

THE GREAT SURVIVOR Bill Clinton leaves office with sky-high approval ratings, but David Halberstam contends that the phenomenal political talent that won him two terms was deployed to a single end: his own survival..... 9

WANTING TO EXHALE In 1998, after her success with Nickelodeon, Geraldine Laybourne started the Oxygen cable and on-line network as the antidote to traditional women's TV. But it can't get on the air in New York or most of Los Angeles. Is Laybourne in danger of becoming a one-hit wonder? David Margolick reports 10

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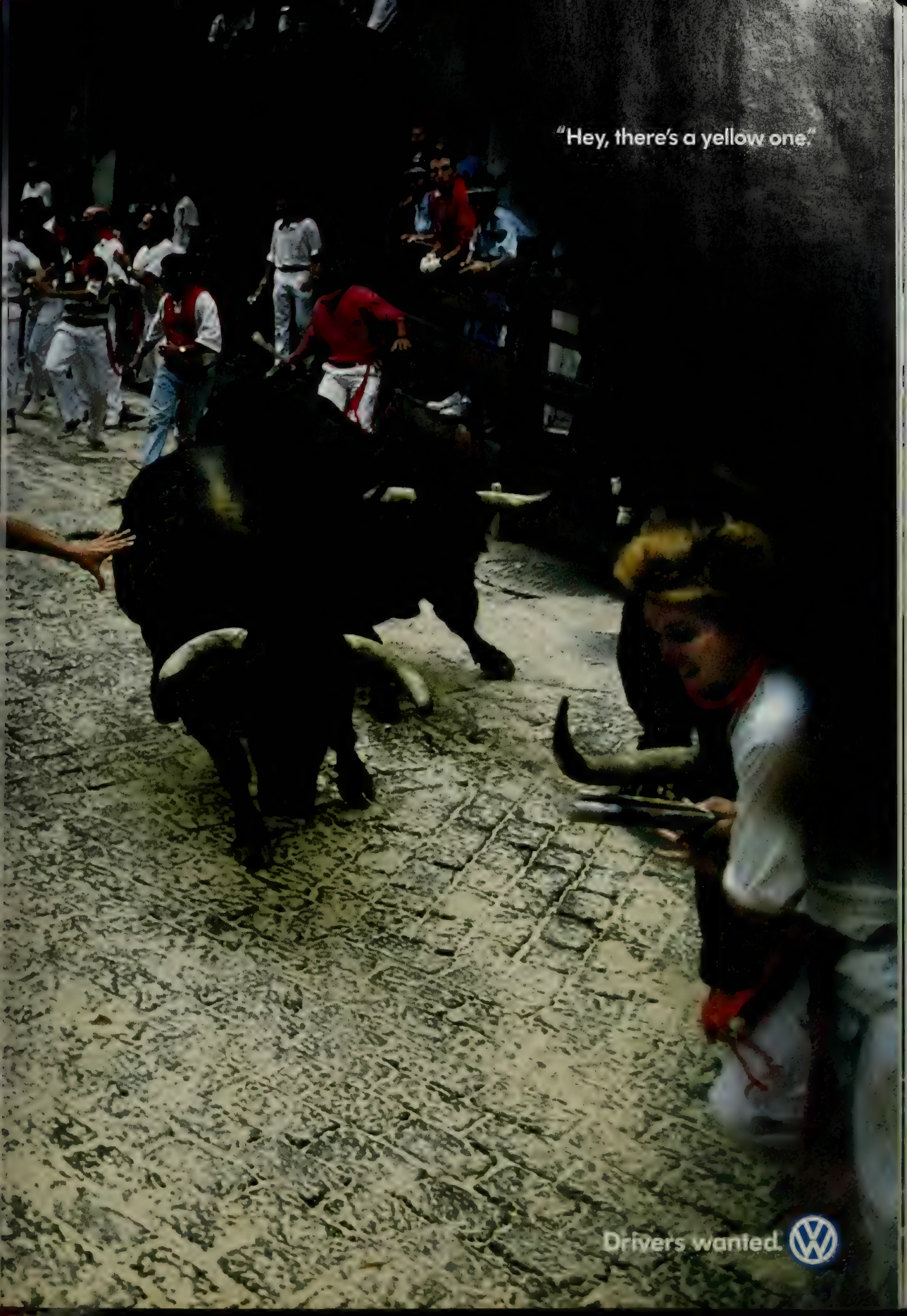
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TWINKLE, TWINKLE, DARREN STAR
Surpassing his former mentor, Aaron Spelling, as the reigning master of prime-time soaps, Darren Star has followed his HBO hit, *Sex and the City,* with the WB's *Grosse Point* and, now, *The Street* on Fox. But Star's edgy subversion of traditional values, James Wolcott argues, is all desire and no heart 64

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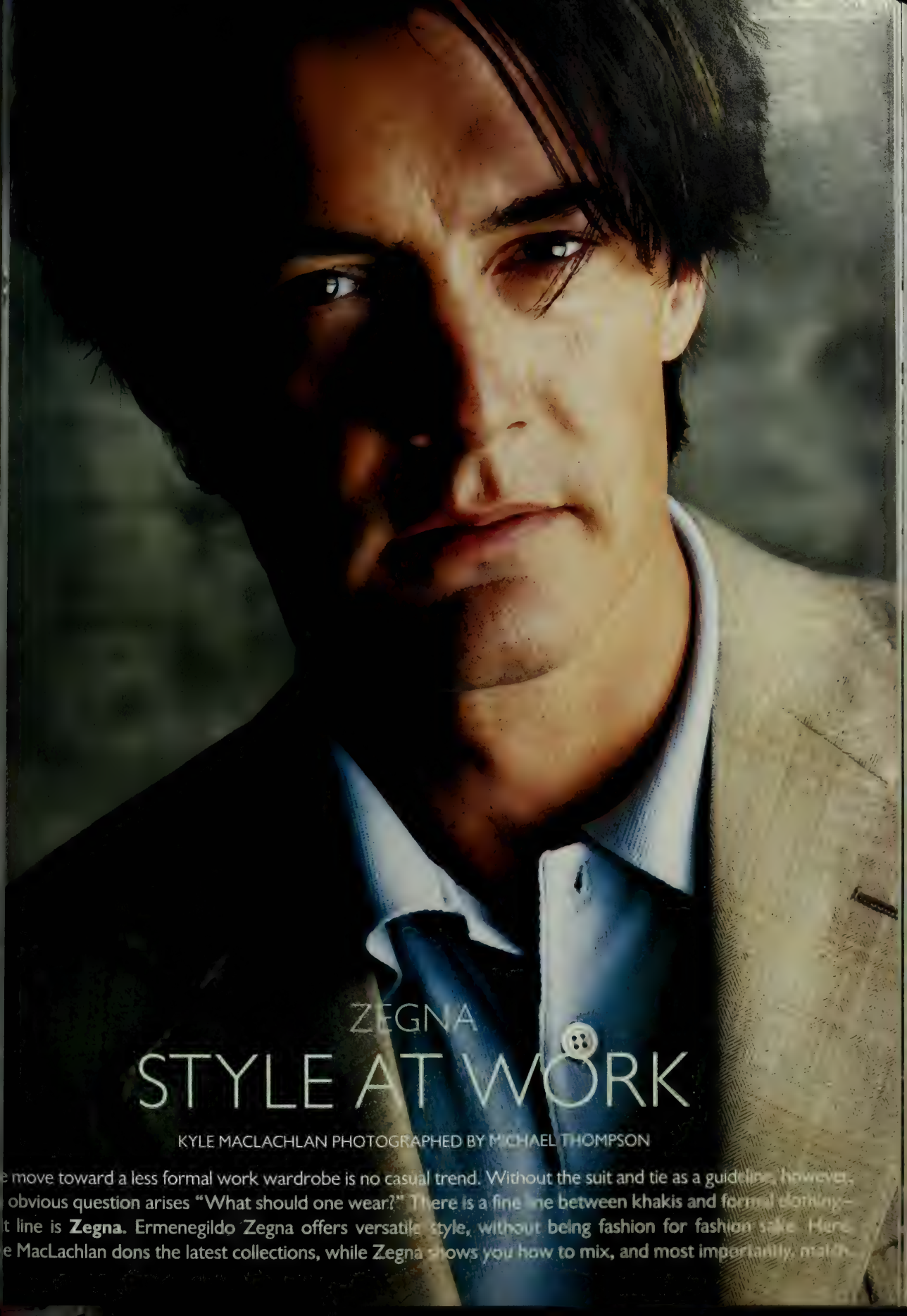
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KYLE MACLACHLAN PHOTOGRAPHED BY MICHAEL THOMPSON

e move toward a less formal work wardrobe is no casual trend. Without the suit and tie as a guideline, however, obvious question arises "What should one wear?" There is a fine line between khakis and formal clothing– t line is **Zegna**. Ermenegildo Zegna offers versatile style, without being fashion for fashion sake. Here, e MacLachlan dons the latest collections, while Zegna shows you how to mix, and most importantly, match


It is possible to look casual in a suit.
It starts, however, by having a relaxed attitude. With comfortable, exclusive **Zegna** fabrics, there's nothing restricting about the new Zegna suit. Your body is free to move where you want, when you want. Relax. You don't have to worry about wrinkles, either. This just may be the first suit jacket you've put on, and not wondered how long it will be before you can take it off.



LIGHTEN UP

This same suit can also be styled in a lighter color palette, but the real beauty is in the details. **Zegna** shirts let you remove your tie, remain stylish, and reveal a one piece collar. (No inside stitching seen here.) ailored knit shirts offer color and breathing room, while the accessories prove traditional doesn't have to be boring.



The soft look revolves around lightweight materials, like cotton and wool blends. The **Zegna** Soft Suit ranges from classic colors, to light and colorful, and is structured just enough to give you a tailored, clean look. It's a style that is meant to give you comfort throughout every moment of the day.



SOFT EQUALS SHARP

Losing the tie, goes for your shoes, too. Opt for soft leather loafers that slip on at a moment's notice. And leave the dress shirt at home—**Zegna's** cashmere knits, pullover sweaters, zip collars, topped off with the buttery leather jacket, make this one sharp, soft-suited look.



These are clothes you live to work in. The shirt jacket is made to be worn, really worn, yet it retains the fine details seen throughout the **Zegna** line. Wrinkles not an issue—this is casual chic that goes from behind the desk, to relaxed living and everywhere in between.



TOUCHDOWN

This winning **Zegna** look comes from loose and relaxed fitting shirts which take their cues from you. Light colored sweater knit shirts, golf shirts and pants say sport without screaming it. Pair with a suede jacket and laced suede shoes.


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TAG Heuer Celebrates Formula 1, Indianapolis-Style

To wrap up TAG Heuer's sponsorship of the U.S. Formula 1 Grand Prix, a pre-race celebration took place on September 23 at The Sexton Garage, a private car collection in Indianapolis. The event was attended by over 200 racing fans, including CART driver and future Formula 1 driver Juan Montoya, the Colts' Payton Manning, guests of TAG Heuer, *Vanity Fair*, *GQ*, and *Condé Nast Traveler*, and TAG Heuer sweepstakes winners Eugene Garvin, Marc Gomberg, and Rob Hazel.





Far Left: Bob Goode and Susan Nicholas of TAG Heuer, Joe and Marlene Sexton, David Savidan of TAG Heuer and Nicole Sexton. *Left:* Jean-Carl Bergen of TAG Heuer and CART driver Juan Montoya.

Mayor's Makeover

On September 14, Mayor's Jewelers unveiled their new advertising campaign at the Heller Gallery in New York City's Meat Packing District. Heavy hitters from the jewelry and watch industry flocked to the highly-anticipated event to see what Mayor's had in store. What they found was a video of the new campaign—presented by President and CEO Sam Getz and Chairman of the Board and CEO Isaac Arguetty—that not only impressed all guests, but reinforced Mayor's branding message.





Right: Isaac Arguetty of Mayor's Jewelers. *Far Right:* Severin Wunderman of Corum, Christian Bédat of Bedat & Co., Benny Shabtai of Raymond Weil, and Sam Getz of Mayor's Jewelers.

Viva Las Vegas

To celebrate the opening night of MAGIC International, the fashion industry's annual trade show, *Vanity Fair* and D&G hosted "D&G Takes Las Vegas". The star studded VIP party took place at Las Vegas' Hard Rock Hotel and featured a D&G fashion show, as well as a special guest performance by Mary J. Blige. The party was attended by over 500 VIPs and celebrities, including Brad Rowe and Rebecca Gayheart.







Left: Suzanne Schwartz of Andrew Marc, and Rob Firestone of Dockers. *Center:* Mary J. Blige. *Right:* Brad Rowe and Rebecca Gayheart.

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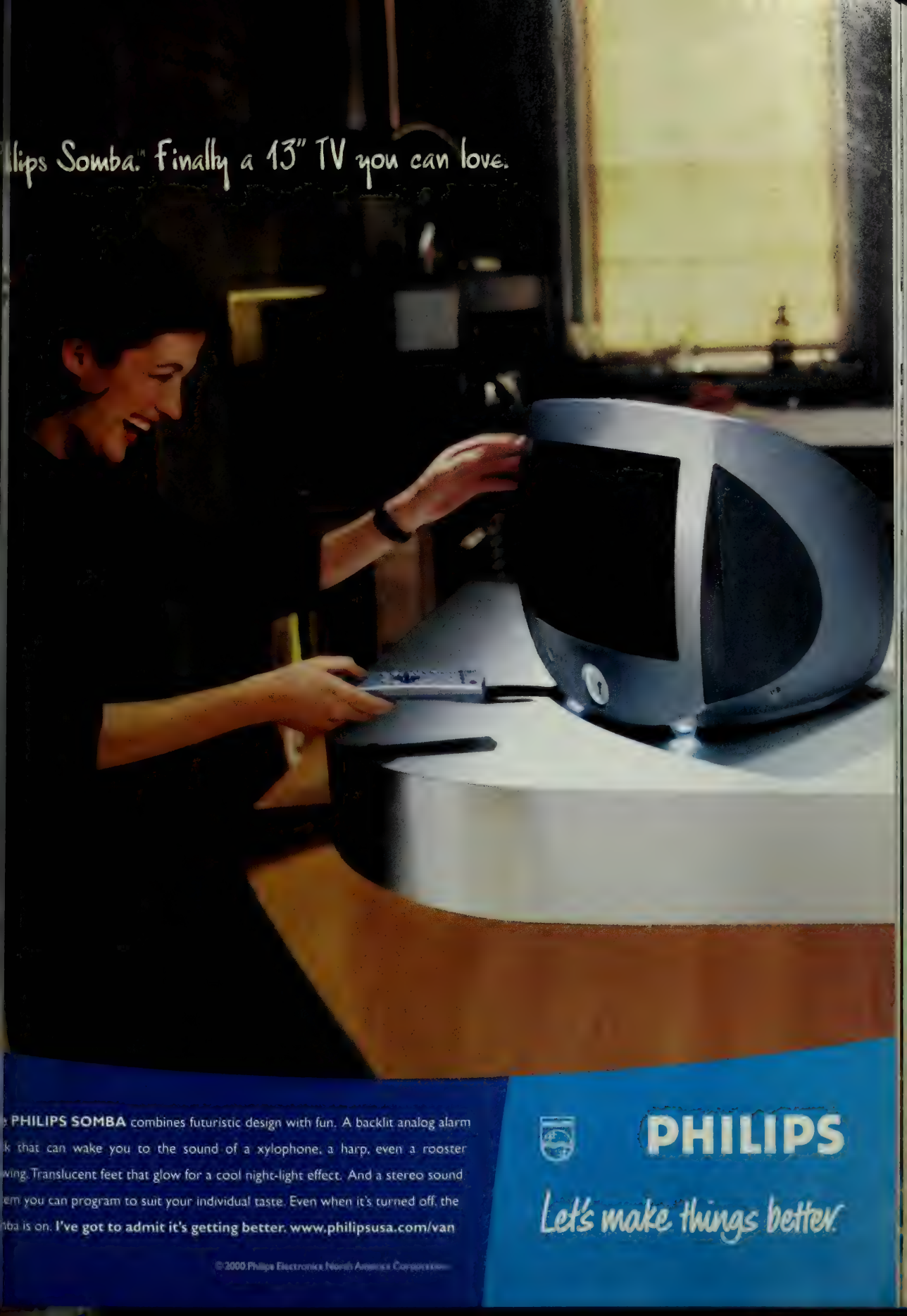
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EDITOR'S LETTER

Masters of the Moment



Pinned to the door of the closet in my office at home is a memorable telephone message from the Hotel Ritz in Paris. It is a wonderfully formal-looking document set in a variety of exquisite typefaces. Dated 16 06 00 at 11:01, the message reads: "Mr. Henri Cartier-Bresson will meet you in the Bar Vendôme between 12h00 and 12h15." I arrived at noon sharp and asked the maître d' for a quiet table. I explained that the person I was meeting was an older gentleman and might be hard of hearing. The maître d' seemed a bit put out and, with a look of some annoyance, gestured to a banquette in the corner. As he led me to the table he inquired as to whom I was meeting. Slightly embarrassed at being forced to drop such a huge name, I said Henri Cartier-Bresson. Well, to say that the man's mood changed! The scales literally fell from his eyes. He shimmered around me offering this and that, to the point where I became nostalgic for our old, more distant relationship.

In time a man and a woman approached me at the table. She was Hélène Véret, a lovely French journalist who had been at *Life* magazine and *Time*. And he, of course, was Henri Cartier-Bresson, the world's greatest photographer, co-founder of the photo agency Magnum, and, in France, an artist officially recognized as a "living national monument." What a marvelous-looking man he was. Although 92, he had a boyish face and clear, electric, vault-of-heaven-blue eyes. There was a hint of mischief in them, too. He explained that he was late because of the security surrounding the hotel. A major Algerian figure was staying there, and the police were questioning anyone coming in. When Cartier-Bresson was stopped, he explained that he had come to deliver a bomb. The gendarmes flew into a suitably French swivet, and only after one of them recognized the photographer was Cartier-Bresson able to explain that he was kidding and allowed to enter the ho

I had worked at *Time* and, like Cart Bresson, at *Life*, and he and Hélène ar caught up on old friends before gett down to the business at hand. Althou he had not accepted an assignment fr an American magazine in 29 years, I w ed him to take portraits of some of his low lensmen for a project we had b working on for months, "Shooting F 80," a 20-page portfolio of photography's living masters.

The genesis of the project was the realization that an astonish number of the great photographers of the last century are still alive working. Included in the group are Leni Riefenstahl, 98, Slim Aar 80, Arnold Newman, 82, Yousuf Karsh, 91, Joe Rosenthal, 89, I Stern, 81, Cornell Capa, 82, and O. Winston Link, 85.

As a young writer at *Life* (where I first met *V.F.*'s creative deve ment editor, David Friend, who wrote the text for the portfolio found it thrilling when legendary photojournalists Alfred Ei staedt, David Douglas Duncan, Carl Mydans, and such were mil about the offices. It was like having one foot in another age. A maga is only about two things: words and pictures. And as we begin the sec year of a new century, I feel that it is the pictures taken by the men women in our portfolio that will over the years make us ever more ful for the texture and events of the last century. Beginning on page we celebrate 18 of these extraordinary masters, whose work all but def the last 60 or 70 years. They are photographed by fellow old-timers ar handful of current masters such as Herb Ritts, Bruce Weber, Mary E Mark, and Jonathan Becker. And Mr. Cartier-Bresson said yes to assignment; his shots of Helmut Newton, 80, Eve Arnold, 87, and W Ronis, 90, are on pages 125, 133, and 122. —GRAYDON CART

Bird of Paradise



ON THE COVER
Catherine Zeta-Jones wears a corset by Cadolle and panties by Eres. Hair by Bob Recine. Makeup by Lisa Butler. Manicure by Roseann Singleton. Styled by Polly Mellen. She was photographed exclusively for *V.F.* by Mario Testino in Manhattan on October 30, 2000.

HAT BY STEPHEN JONES FOR JOHN GALLIANO. FOR DETAILS, SEE CREDITS PAGE


GIORGIO ARMANI

SWINGING THINGS HAPPEN IN THE "OUI" HOURS



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At 92, **Henri Cartier-Bresson,** considered a "historic monument" in France, might have easily dismissed an assignment to photograph Helmut Newton. In fact, it's been almost 30 years since his last major U.S. magazine work, and he now spends much of his time drawing. Yet, characteristically, Cartier-Bresson threw himself into the creative moment, capturing Newton beside a statue of Chopin and his muse in Le Parc Monceau in Paris. He was less eager to *talk* about the shoot, however. "There is no need to play cello on a little tune that I just whistled," says Cartier-Bresson, adding, "*La vanité n'est pas une bonne affaire.*"



GASPER TRINGALE

In this issue, contributing editor **David Halberstam** analyzes the definition of the word "survivalist," and explains why Bill Clinton fits the label. "I think that, because of all the contradictions, Clinton will l as rich a vein for historians to mine as Richard Nixon," says Halberstam. The Pulitzer Prize-winning author of 16 books, including the 1972 classic *The B and the Brightest,* Halberstam is finishing *The Politicians and t Generals,* which takes a look at the "sea change in politics and foreign policy at the end of the Cold War." It will be publis by Scribner next fall.

Last April contributing editor **David Margolick** appeared on the Oxygen network's *Pure Oxygen* talk show to discuss *Strange Fruit,* his book on Billie Holiday. "In New York City," Margolick says, "you can be on the most obscure public-access channel and someone will see you, but here I was on a $300 million, state-of-the-art television network populated with idealistic and intelligent young people, and no one saw me—at least no one I know." That's because Oxygen doesn't actually *air* in New York City, just one of the problems plaguing the fledgling network, which Margolick writes about on page 100.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32





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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 28



On page 90, special correspondent **Bryan Burrough** tells the story of Christopher Rocancourt, who, passing himself off as a Rockefeller, among others, made a career of partnering with legitimate businesspeople and running off with their money. "The key to his success was that he was able to traffic effectively in circles of the nouveau riche," says Burrough, whose December 1999 story about another con artist, "Miranda," has been optioned by Tribeca Films. "Rocancourt's mistake, however, was in being wholly ignorant of class distinctions. It was the old-money people, the ones out in the Hamptons who actually played tennis with Rockefellers, who smelled a fraud."



NINA BRAMHAL

Contributing editor **Judy Bachrach** was surprised by how open German and British aristocrats were in discussing Prince Ernst August of Hanover, the subject of her profile on page 110. Noting how the European aristocracy generally protects royalty, Bachrach says, "They don't feel that way about Ernst anymore. They feel his actions and his violence and his aggression ruin their own reputation." Bachrach, who reported her story from Hanover, London, and Monaco, birthplace of Ernst's wife, Princess Caroline, also wonders why Caroline made Ernst her third husband. "Poor old Caroline keeps choosing the wrong guys," says Bachrach. "She's making the kind of mistakes in middle age that most of us make in adolescence."

With her story this month about the rise and fall of financier Saul Steinberg and his wife, Gayfryd, contributing editor **Suzanna Andrews,** who has recently written about crime, turns her sights back to Wall Street excess, a subject she covered in the 1980s and early 90s. "I was surprised to learn that there is much more to the Steinbergs than I originally thought," says Andrews. "There is an almost biblical quality to their story. Although their values appear to be askew, in the process of handling their crisis they also revealed themselves to be of much greater substance and quality than people realized."





GASPER TRINGALE

Contributing editor **Leslie Bennetts** calls actress Catherine Zeta-Jones "a throwback to an earlier era," and finds her strikingly different from other actresses of her time, such as Kate Hudson and Natalie Portman, both of whom Bennetts has profiled for *V.F.* "She's a real man's woman," says Bennetts, whose story starts on page 82. "Not just because she's beautiful, because she has the irresistible allure of a siren. You'd never cast her as the wife's best friend—unless the wife was going to find out that Catherine was sleeping with her husband."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 38


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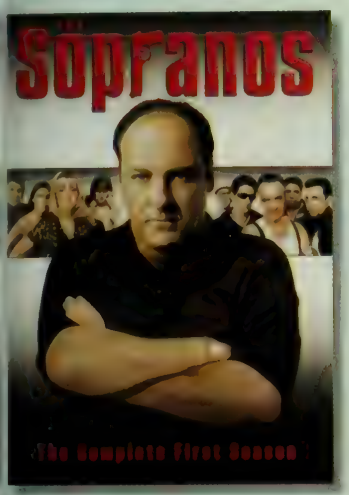
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Rena Lange Goes Hollywood

Rena Lange, the Entertainment Industry Foundation, and *Vanity Fair* joined together on September 13 for an evening of cocktails, philanthropy, and fashion. Over 300 publicists, writers, directors, producers, stylists, and actors gathered at Santa Monica's Buffalo Club in support of EIF's New Millennium Task Force, a committee of emerging young agents and future power brokers in the film, television, and music industries. The evening featured a special guest appearance by Tom Sherak, chairman of the 20th Century Film Group of Fox Filmed Entertainment, followed by a preview of Rena Lange's Spring/Summer 2001 Collection.





Left: Jim Osborne, co-chair of EIF's New Millennium Task Force; Randall Wallace, writer and producer; Tom Sherak, chairman of 20th Century Film Group of Fox Filmed Entertainment; and William Sherak, co-chair of EIF's New Millennium Task Force. *Right:* Rena Lange's Jim Fletcher and actress Thora Birch.

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 32



In **James Wolcott's** opinion, "the most accessible shows on TV are shows that are more idealistic and have a certain rigor to them. And yet, there's something about the habits of Hollywood now—they still want to make the real put-down, nasty, abrasive stuff." A prime example of this phenomenon is Darren Star's new show on Fox, *The Street,* which Wolcott assesses on page 64. Still, Wolcott is not entirely disillusioned about the state of television. "I think the effect of criticism on producers and writers is had when a show is struggling, and it's a good show," he says. "The shows that are good are still worth writing about."



GASPER TRINGALE

Contributing editor **Christopher Hitche** has crossed plenty of awkward frontiers, but stepping into North Korea for his colu this month was particularly precarious. "In North Korea there's no breakdown of authority, but if they decided they don't like you—who are they going to call? The police?" Hitchens's new book, *Unacknowl Legislation: Writers in the Public Sphere* (Verso), a collection of his essays on literat is due out this month. His captions for *Vanity Fair's Hollywood,* which has just bee published by Viking Studio, were describe by Amazon.com as being "as succinctly cl as Dorothy Parker, encapsulating entire careers in a punning paragraph."

For the portfolio of photographers over 80, **Brigitte Lacombe** took a portrait of Lillian Bassman. "She was a major fashion photographer who started her career with Alexey Brodovitch at *Harper's Bazaar,*" says Lacombe, who grew up in Paris. "She certainly led the way for me, and it was a wonderful thing to see somebody who still finds the energy, love, and enthusiasm to work at a later stage." Lacombe's first book, *Lacombe Cinema/Theatre* (Schirmer/Mosel), will be published in the spring.





MICHAEL O'NEILL

According to **Michael O'Neill,** the four photojournalists from *Life* magazine whom he photographed for this month's "Shooting Past 80" portfolio "built the foundation of what we currently define as the documentary style." Also in the portfolio, O'Neill captures O. Winston Link, alongside the A-class steam engine, Link's favorite subject. "When we brought out that engine, he was like a kid with his favorite toy," O'Neill says. "It was hot and humid and late, but his face beamed the entire night."

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BOOGIE DAYS

Encore, Annie Leibovitz; music to Madonna's ears; Elvis Costello, where are *you?*; loving a rock snob; Whisky dreams; MTV hangover; Robert Kennedy Jr. vs. Dominick Dunne



LISTEN TO THAT HOOK John Lee Hooker, photographed by Annie Leibovitz at his home in Los Altos, California, on July 27, 2000.

Your Music Issue [November] was truly wicked—Madonna, Massive Attack, Aimee Mann, and P J Harvey all in one issue?! And Annie Leibovitz's decision to place the very lovely and talented Fiona Apple at the feet of the legendary Patti Smith on the cover was most inspired.

PAUL KENT MING CHOY
Vancouver, British Columbia

IN THE GALLERY of photographs for your Music Issue, the most stunning portrait, hands down, is Annie Leibovitz's picture of Carly Simon and her children.

I'd also like to offer the argument to Graydon Carter that Carly Simon's charm can indeed do magic to a Radiohead fan. The complete works of Ms. Simon, along with daughter Sally's two albums, coexist quite nicely with *Kid A* in my collection.

JEFFREY SIDELSKY
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

NOTHING TOUCHED me as profoundly as Annie Leibovitz's photograph of John Lee Hooker. I saw embedded in that image a life of stereotypes and of dreams realized and dreams lost. After a lifetime of music, there sat Mr. Hooker, in meager surroundings that most of us would consider a way station. Spartan furnishings, flyswatter at the ready, and the epitome of material possessions garnered: a Cadillac in the drive.

BARBARA ALLEN
Los Angeles, California

IN TUNE WITH MADONNA

PRAISE TO STEVEN DALY for his excellent article on Madonna ["Like an Artist," November]. With so many journalists hell-bent on dissecting Madonna's persona and analyzing its cultural weight, it was refreshing to read an article that focused on the one thing that's important: the music. Daly put Madonna's musical career in sensible order and wonderfully



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brought to light the earmarks and milestones that have kept it relevant and current over the years.

GREG VICKERS
Hamilton, Ontario

FINALLY, A MAGAZINE brazen enough to admit that Madonna is a pop genius and not just a mediocre singer who has managed to sustain herself for 16 years on a wave of pure luck.

LESLEY ABRAVANEL
Miami Beach, Florida

YOU PEOPLE are the biggest supporters of Madonna propaganda *ever.* It seems as if Steven Daly ghostwrote the article for Madonna herself.

D. MORGAN
San Diego, California

ELVIS PUMPS IT UP

THANK YOU for the inspired selection of Elvis Costello to take on the daunting task of culling only 500 artists from what must seem like a cosmos of talent ["Costello's 500," November]. It was such a relief to see that you didn't choose a music critic but instead chose someone who adores music for what it can do: revive, inspire, ignite, and console.

A. J. DOHERTY
Barrington, Illinois

ELVIS COSTELLO'S LIST of the greatest LPs and CDs was astonishingly perceptive. I thought I was the only one who knew that David Ackles's "Down River" was one of the very greatest of rock songs. Save Costello's omission of the one unknown group that really *did* produce wonderful rock, the Paupers, his list was perfection. But one question: Is there some juicy bit of inside stuff I'm missing? Costello doesn't include anything by Eric Clapton or any of his groups, Cream, Blind Faith, and Derek & the Dominos. One is hard put to deny the greatness of "Layla."

STEVEN GOLDBERG
New York, New York

ELVIS, CUT THE CRAP. Do you really expect anyone to believe that D'Angelo's *Voodoo* or anything by Eminem is better than the likes of your *Blood and Chocolate, Get Happy!!, Brutal Youth,* or *Imperial Bedroom*?

MICHAEL SEGRETTO
Brooklyn, New York

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RICKENBACKER-HEAD

I WAS DELIGHTED by your "Rock Snob's Dictionary" [by Steven Daly, David Kamp, and Bob Mack, November]. For years I have been privy to hundreds of conversations between my boyfriend and his friends about the very topics included in your glossary. I dubbed my love a "music elitist" because I had no idea what he was talking about. I now understand that I should call him a "Rock Snob." It is so much easier to say.

While lying in bed and flipping through my newly delivered issue, I came upon those key words in big, bold letters. I decided to test my sweetheart, and read them off one by one to see if he was truly a Rock Snob. After he passed with flying colors, in true Rock Snob fashion he declared, "Well, they definitely know their stuff, but why would they include P-Funk? *Everyone* knows what P-Funk is."

CARLA CALAMITA
Seattle, Washington

WHISKY NIGHTS

WHISKY À GO GO founder Elmer Valentine and his partner Mario Maglieri were exactly as David Kamp described in his article "Live at the Whisky" [November]. The Whisky à Go Go did make dreams come true for both stars and street kids. I was one of those "nobodies" whom Mario Maglieri found on the sidewalk—in my case less than 12 hours after I had abandoned my old life as a teenage rube from Beverly, Massachusetts. If they saw fire in your eyes for the music they were hosting, you were in. Within minutes I went from being another face at the door to hanging out with people I'd seen only in magazines and on television. Everyone Valentine and Maglieri liked was made to feel like a hotshot. For me that simple gesture of kindness, from two guys who didn't have to give you the time of day, led to dream jobs as an audio engineer for the Rolling Stones, John Lennon, and the Who, and a lifetime of memories that never would have taken place without them.

DAVID PELLETIER
Salem, Massachusetts

ME AND MY MTV

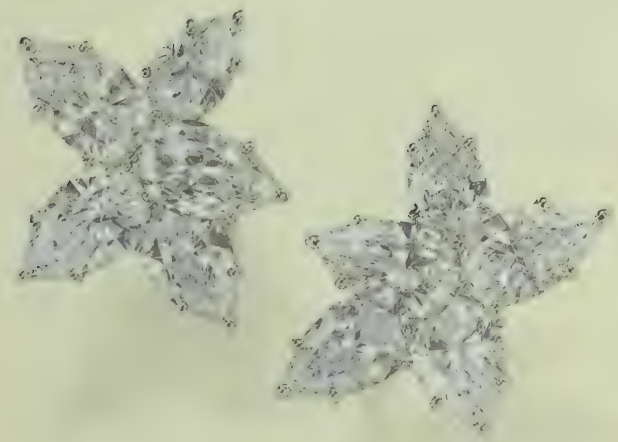
DESPITE MY VERY PARTISAN stance on the issue, I want to congratulate Robert Sam Anson on his thoughtful, unbiased, and well-documented look at MTV in the early years ["MTV Nation," Novem-

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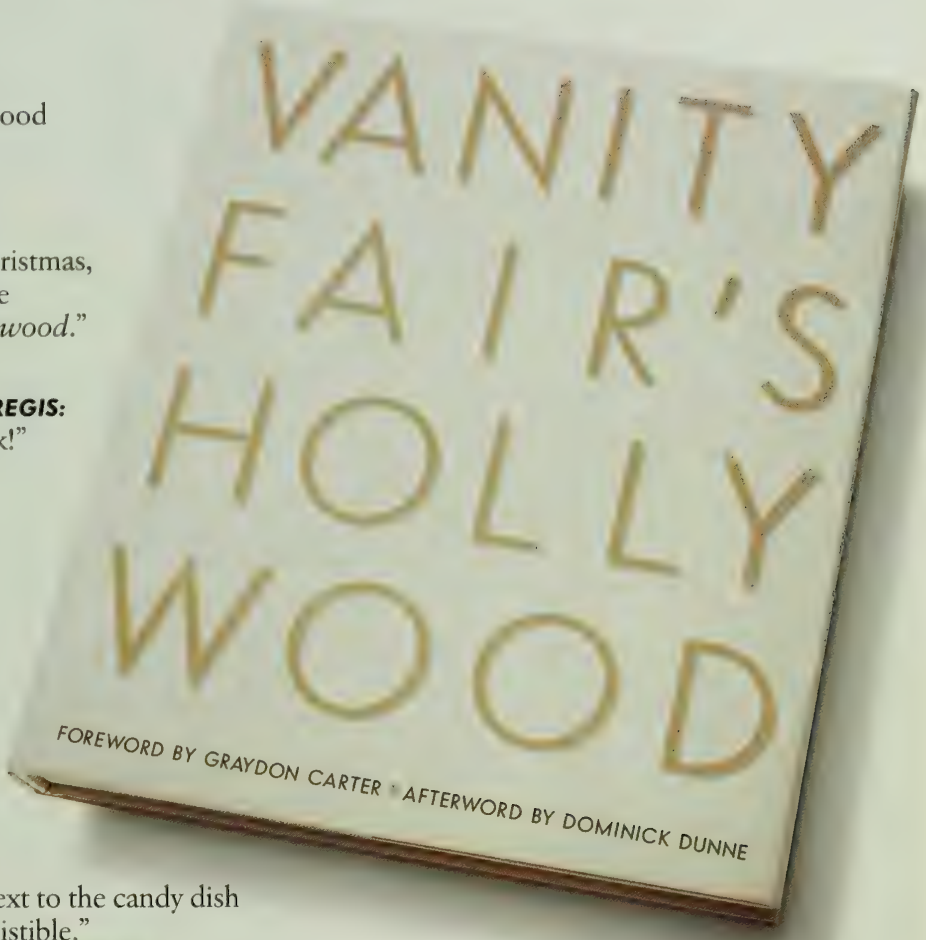
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nd see which is more irresistible."





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ber]. As one of those original on-camera purveyors of video music, I was aware of what was going on in the upper echelons of the corporate towers, but more often I was cocooned in the warmth of a television studio or out exhausting myself in the blast of the 80s New York nightlife. Little did I know how *Über*-important my fledgling cable gig was or how seriously people with suits and money really took us.

I had a kind of out-of-body experience while reading Mr. Anson's encyclopedic look at my first real job in the entertainment business in that I knew the players and bathed in the excess—I just never took it very seriously. How could paradigms shift so massively on the hips of Madonna and Duran Duran?

ALAN HUNTER
Birmingham, Alabama

AS AN AGING rock music fan, designer of album packages, and one of the contributors to the original MTV logo, I was really looking forward to reading your luscious-looking music issue from cover to cover. Things were going just fine until I hit your revisionist theory of the birth of the MTV logo. Patti Rogoff was indeed involved in the creation of the MTV logo. But the mysterious, crazy-making "they" referred to in her statement were her partners in Manhattan Design, Pat Gorman and myself. Admittedly, things are a little hazy 20 years later, but each of the partners contributed to the creation of this icon. In fact, the revolutionary aspect of the logo—that it continually changed its appearance—was invented by Pat Gorman and myself.

FRANK OLINSKY
Brooklyn, New York

A SIGNAL FROM CAMELOT

IN YOUR OCTOBER issue, Dominick Dunne wrote without irony or apology that he once believed and actively promoted the theory that my cousin Tommy Skakel murdered Martha Moxley ["Trail of Guilt"]. Then and now, he ignored or cavalierly dismissed strong evidence against other, non-Skakel suspects, fascinated, it seems, by the idea that Thomas may have escaped prosecution because his paternal aunt married a Kennedy. Mr. Dunne spent a year hawking a book based upon this premise, making frequent television and press appearances in an aggressive campaign to convince the world of Tommy's guilt. I witnessed the almost unimaginable agony that these accusations caused Thomas Skakel. Among them were lost job opportunities and social isolation for Thomas and his family. Now Dunne has become convinced that Michael Skakel, not Thomas Skakel, is the murderer, and has launched a new campaign to convince the world of the same. Michael is innocent. He is a kind, gentle, generous, honest, and humorous man who does not have a mean or violent inclination. Thanks to Dunne's largely successful efforts, Michael's life is now a kind of hell.

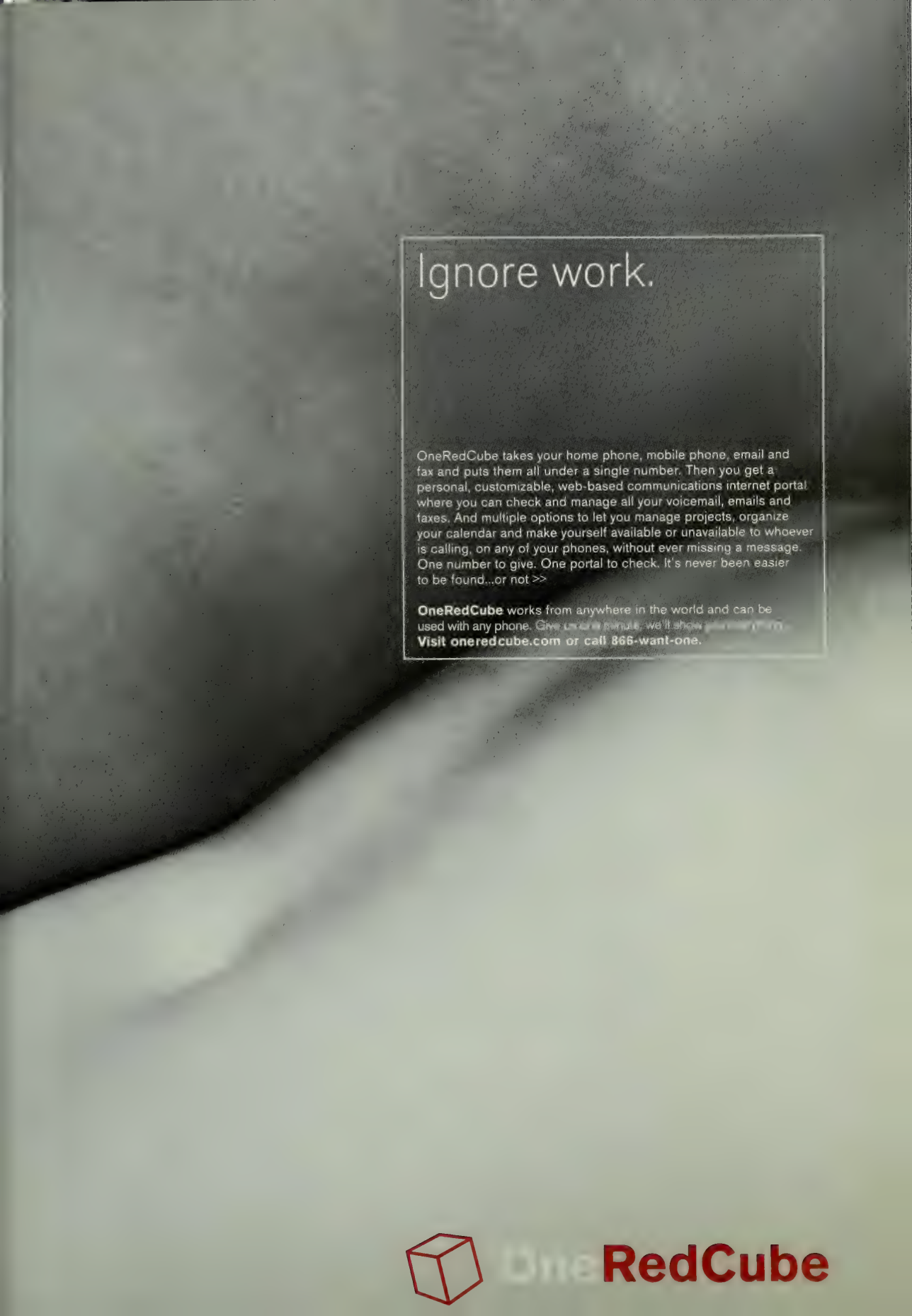
Martha Moxley's death was an unspeakable tragedy that has devastated so many lives. Dunne is misguided in his efforts to right this wrong, and the callous carelessness with which he branded first Thomas and now Michael Skakel has merely compounded the tragedy.

ROBERT F. KENNEDY JR.
White Plains, New York

DOMINICK DUNNE RESPONDS: I find Mr. Kennedy's letter utterly absurd. Thomas Skakel was the last person to be seen with Martha Moxley, roughhousing with her on the lawn of the Skakel house shortly before her vicious murder. He had been named as the prime suspect years before I had any interest in writing a novel based on the case. Mr. Kennedy should be clearer about the strong evidence against other, non-Skakel suspects. I am unaware of any. Ken Littleton, the private tutor who was in the house on the night of the murder, was long ago cleared of any implication in the case. Mr. Kennedy should be reminded that it was Judge Maureen Dennis who ruled that there was sufficient evidence against Michael Skakel to go to trial for the murder, after hearing fellow students from the Elan School testify under oath in a court hearing that Michael had confessed to the murder. Judge Dennis's decision had nothing to do with anything I wrote. A grand jury sat for a year listening to evidence before Michael Skakel was indicted. Mr. Kennedy should also be reminded that it was Michael Skakel's father, Rushton, who paid for the private investigators whose report on the case pointed to Michael Skakel as the killer.

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SUN KING
A festive performance on the occasion of Madeleine Albright's visit to Pyongyang, October 23, 2000. *Inset*, Kim Jong Il attends a military parade in Pyongyang, April 1992.

VISIT TO A SMALL PLANET

North Koreans worship their dead dictator, Kim Il Sung, and his son the reigning Kim Jong Il, despite the surreal nightmare of famine, isolation, repression, and nuclear peril the dynasty has spawned. In Pyongyang, the author wonders whether mass delusion is the only thing that keeps a people sane

The North Korean capital, Pyongyang, is a city consecrated to the worship of a father-son dynasty. (I came to think of them, with their nuclear-family implications, as "Fat Man and Little Boy.") And a river runs through it. And on this river, the Taedong River, is moored the only American naval vessel in captivity. It was in January 1968 that the U.S.S. *Pueblo* strayed into North Korean waters, and was boarded and captured. One sailor was killed; the rest were held for nearly a year before being released. I looked over the spy ship, its radio antennae and surveillance equipment still intact, and found photographs of the captain and crew with their hands on their heads in gestures of abject surrender. Copies of their groveling "confessions," written in tremulous script, were also on show. So was a humiliating document from the United States government, admitting wrongdoing in the penetration of North Korean waters and petitioning the "D.P.R.K." (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) for "lenience." Kim Il Sung ("Fat Man") was eventually lenient about the men, but not about the ship. Madeleine Albright didn't ask to see the vessel on her visit last October, during which she described the gruesome, depopulated vistas of Pyongyang as "beautiful." As I got back onto the wharf, I noticed a refreshment cart, staffed by two women under a frayed umbrella. It didn't look like much—one of its three wheels was missing and a piece of brick was propping it up—but it was the only such cart I'd see. What toothsome local snacks might the ladies be offering? The choices turned out to be slices of dry bread and cups of warm water.

Nor did Madeleine Albright visit the absurdly misnamed "Demilitarized Zone," one of the most heavily militarized strips of land on earth. Across the waist of the Korean peninsula lies a wasteland, roughly following the 38th parallel, and packed with a titanic concentration of potential violence. It is four kilometers wide (I have now looked apprehensively at it from both sides) and very near to the capital cities of both North and South. On the day I spent on the northern side, I met a group of aging Chinese veterans, all from Szechuan, touring the old battlefields and reliving a war they helped North Korea nearly win (China sacrificed perhaps a million soldiers in that campaign, including Mao Anying, son of Mao himself). Across the frontier are 37,000 United States soldiers. Their arsenal, which has included undeclared nuclear weapons, is

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the reason given by Washington for its refusal to sign the land-mines treaty. In August 1976, U.S. officers entered the neutral zone to trim a tree that was obscuring the view of an observation post. A posse of North Koreans came after them, and one, seizing the ax with which the trimming was to be done, hacked two U.S. servicemen to death with it. I visited the ax also; it's proudly displayed in a glass case on the North Korean side.

A local phrase book, entitled *Speak in Korean,* has the following handy expressions. In the section "On the Way to the Hotel": "Let's Mutilate US Imperialism!" In the section "Word Order": "Yankees are wolves in human shape—Yankees / in human shape / wolves / are." In the section "Farewell Talk": "The US Imperialists are the sworn enemy of the Korean people." Not that the book is all like this—the section "At the Hospital" has the term *solsaga* ("I have loose bowels"), and the section "Our Foreign Friends Say" contains the Korean for "President Kim Il Sung is the sun of mankind."

I wanted a spare copy of this phrase book to give to a friend, but found it was hard to come by. Perhaps this was a sign of a new rapprochement with the United States, or perhaps it was because, on page 46, in the section on the seasons, appear the words: *haemada pungnyoni dumnida* ("We have a bumper harvest every year").

I was hungry when I left Pyongyang. I wasn't hungry just for a bookshop that sold books that weren't about Fat Man and Little Boy. I wasn't ravenous just for a newspaper that had no pictures of F.M. and L.B. I wasn't starving just for a TV program or a piece of music or theater or cinema that wasn't cultist and hero-worshiping. I was *hungry.* I got off the North Korean plane in Shenyang, one of the provincial capitals of Manchuria, and the airport buffet looked like a cornucopia. I fell on the food, only to find that I couldn't do it justice, because my stomach had shrunk. And as a foreign tourist in North Korea, under the care of vigilant minders who wanted me to see only the best, I had enjoyed the finest fare available.

North Korea is a famine state. In the fields, you can see people picking up loose grains of rice and kernels of corn, gleaning every scrap. They look pinched and exhausted. In the few, dingy restaurants in the city, and even in the few modern hotels, you can read the *Pyongyang Times* through the soup, or the tea, or the coffee. Morsels of inexplicable fat or gristle are served as "duck." One evening I gave in and tried a bowl of dog stew, which at least tasted hearty and spicy (they wouldn't tell me the breed—but then found my appetite crucially diminished by the realization that I hadn't seen a domestic animal, not even the merest cat, in the whole time I was there. (In a Pyongyang restaurant, don't ever ask for a doggie bag.) Nobody knows how many North Koreans have died or are dying in the famine—some estimates by foreign-aid groups run as high as three million in the period from 1995 to 1998 alone—but the rotund, jowly face of Kim Il Sung still beams down contentedly from every wall, and the 58-year-old son looks as chubby as ever, even as his slenderized subjects are mustered to applaud him. Kim Jong Il, incidentally, has been made head of the party and of the army, but the office of the presidency is still "eternally" held by his adored and departed dad, who died on July 8, 1994, at 82. (The Kim is dead. Long live the Kim.) This makes North Korea the only state in the world with a dead president. What would be the right term for this? A necrocracy? A thanatocracy? A mortocracy? A mausolocracy? Anyway, grimly appropriate for a morbid system so many of whose children have died with grass in their mouths.



SEOUL PURPOSE
South Korean president Kim Dae Jung and North Korean leader Kim Jong Il toast each other during their summit in Pyongyang, June 15, 2000.

Even in former days, Korea was known as the "hermit kingdom" for its stubborn resistance to outsiders.

Even in former days, Korea was known as the "hermit kingdom" for its stubborn resistance to outsiders. And if you wanted to create a totally isolated and hermetic society, northern Korea in the years after the 1953 "armistice" would have been the place to start. It was bounded on two sides by the sea, and to the south by the impregnable and uncrossable DMZ, which divided it from South Korea. Its northern frontier consisted of a long stretch of China and a short stretch of Siberia; in other words its only contiguous neighbors were Mao and Stalin. (The next-nearest neighbor was Japan, historic enemy of the Koreans and the cruel colonial occupier until 1945.) Add to that the fact that almost every work of man had been reduced to shards by the Korean War. Air-force general Curtis LeMay later boasted that "we burned down *every* town in North Korea," and that he grounded his bombers only when there were no more targets to hit anywhere north of the 38th parallel. Pyongyang was an ashen moonscape. It was Year Zero. Kim Il Sung could create a laboratory, with controlled conditions, where he alone would be the engineer of the human soul.

During my sojourn in this lab, I got an idea of why the more it remains the same, the more it changes. In the past few years, the hermetic seal has broken and is now leaking in all directions. Take those fearsome cases of anti-American xenophobia with which I began. The uniformed guards who gave me a tour of the U.S.S. *Pueblo* asked for five dollars to add my visit to the schedule (the ship is normally off-limits) and wanted to score a couple of packs of American cigarettes when the tour was done. The same *pourboire* worked wonders during my visit to the DMZ. In the basement of my hotel, a casino had been opened by Chinese riffraff from the gambling capital of Macao, who once tried to stop me from playing blackjack because I was wearing peasant sandals and was thus improperly attired. In a karaoke bar in downtown Pyongyang, while I regaled the customers with a spirited rendition of "Girls Just Wanna Have Fun," "La Bamba," and, as the night wore on, "Proud Mary," my Korean friends preferred the soothing banality and individualism of "Yesterday" and—a solid favorite—"My Way." (There's a special plangency to the line about facing the final curtain.) One night I snuck off for a sauna and mas-


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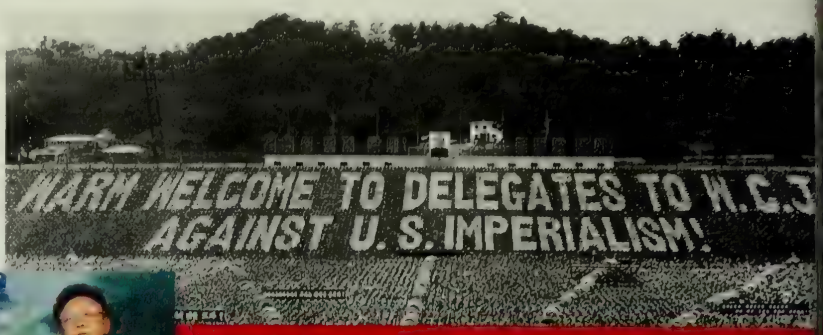
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sage. For nearly an hour I was alone and unsupervised with a Korean civilian. But I couldn't make much of it, because she didn't speak English and also chose to numb me with techniques that seemed more like Tae Kwon Do than massage. As I took my aching joints back to the hot tub, I saw one of my guides materializing, naked and glistening through the steam. When our eyes met we conceded unspokenly that we'd both gone above and beyond the call of duty.





NORTHERN CHARM
Above, hundreds of North Koreans form a sign at an international journalists' conference in Pyongyang, circa 1968. *Left,* U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright and North Korean leader Kim Jong Il at the Pae Kha Hawon Guest House in Pyongyang, October 23, 2000.

During her October visit, Madeleine Albright described the gruesome, depopulated vistas of Pyongyang as "beautiful."

Playing pool with Korean officials one evening in the Koryo Hotel, which has become the nightspot for foreign businessmen and an increasing number of diplomats (to say nothing of the burgeoning number of spies and journalists traveling under second identities), I was handed that day's edition of the *Pyongyang Times.* At first glance it seemed too laughable for words: endless pictures of the "Dear Leader"—Little Boy's exalted title—as he was garlanded by adoring schoolchildren and heroic tractor drivers. Yet even in these turgid pages there were nuggets: a telegram congratulating the winner of the Serbian elections; a candid reference to the "hardship period" through which the country had been passing; an assurance that a certain nuclear power plant would be closed as part of a deal with Washington. Tiny cracks, to be sure. But a complete and rigid edifice cannot afford fissures, however small. There appear to be no hookers, as yet, in Pyongyang. Yet if casinos come, can working girls be far behind? One perhaps ought not to wish for hookers, but there are circumstances when corruption is the only hope.

The external changes have been much more dramatic, and it's by means of these hints that those on the inside can at last begin to guess what's going on in the big world. The Soviet Union has vanished, and its Russian successor no longer wants to buy North Korean goods at the old fraternal rates. China, which once had a lower standard of living than North Korea, is now booming. All along the northern border, even Little Boy's frontier guards can see that the lights are on all night in China across the Yalu and Tumen Rivers, while blackouts and shortages are the common lot on the North Korean side. (The power cuts out continually in North Korea. The lights went off even while I was touring the U.S.S. *Pueblo,* which is a showpiece.) The Yanbian prefecture of China's Jilin Province is largely Korean-speaking, and at least a quarter of a million famine refugees have crossed the border at great risk and are hiding among their kin. This is unprecedented; nobody knows the effect of the "feedback"—a grim term under the circumstances—among the relatives left behind. But, for the first time since the foundation of the North Korean state, a dissident movement is beginning to put out tiny shoots among the hunger exiles, many of whom cross and recross the stricken frontier areas.

Most important of all, though, is the sudden thaw from the South. Kim Dae Jung, this year's Nobel laureate for peace, is a man much more deserving of adulation than either Fat Man or Little Boy. I'm proud to say that I know him slightly. When he returned to South Korea from exile in 1985, having survived imprisonment and kidnapping and at least one assassination attempt, carried out by the dreaded Korean Central Intelligence Agency, I went along with him and was a witness to his arrest by the military junta at Seoul airport. By dint of truly astonishing bravery and patience—he had to "win" an election that was overturned by the generals before he was allowed finally to succeed—Kim Dae Jung has put an end to half a century of dismal and sordid military/police dictatorship on the southern half of the peninsula. It's no longer possible for the North Koreans to claim that the "other" regime is a colonial puppet held in place by American troops.

Kim Dae Jung has wagered everything on what he calls a "sunshine" approach to his austere and backward northern neighbor. Everybody's breath was caught by his visit to Pyongyang last June, and by the reunions of sundered families that followed it. There is even talk of building a direct road and rail link between the South Korean capital of Seoul and Pyongyang—something that would have been unimaginable a year ago.

Sooner or later, all talk among foreigners in Pyongyang turns to one imponderable subject. Do the locals really believe what they are told, and do they truly revere Fat Man and Little Boy? I have been a visiting writer in several authoritarian and totalitarian states, and usually the question answers itself. Someone in a café makes an offhand remark. A piece of ironic graffiti is scrawled in the men's room. Some group at the university issues some improvised leaflet. The glacier begins to melt; a joke makes the rounds and the apparently immovable regime suddenly looks vulnerable and absurd. But it's almost impossible to convey the extent to which North Korea just isn't like that. South Koreans who met with long-lost family members after the June rapprochement were thunderstruck at the way their shabby and thin northern relatives extolled Fat Man and Little Boy. Of course, they had been handpicked, but they stuck to their line.

There's a possible reason for the existence of this level of denial, which is backed up by an indescribable degree of surveillance and indoctrination. A North Korean


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citizen who decided that it was all a lie and a waste would have to face the fact that his life had been a lie and a waste also. The scenes of hysterical grief when Fat Man died were not all feigned; there might be a collective nervous breakdown if it was suddenly announced that the Great Leader had been a verbose and arrogant fraud. Picture, if you will, the abrupt deprogramming of more than 20 million Moonies or Jonestowners, who are suddenly informed that it was all a cruel joke and there's no longer anybody to tell them what to do. There wouldn't be enough Kool-Aid to go round. I often wondered how my guides kept straight faces. The streetlights are turned out all over Pyongyang—which is the most favored city in the country—every night. And the most prominent building on the skyline, in a town committed to hysterical architectural excess, is the Ryugyong Hotel. It's 105 floors high, and from a distance looks like a grotesquely enlarged version of the Transamerica Pyramid in San Francisco (or like a vast and cumbersome missile on a launchpad). The crane at its summit hasn't moved in years; it's a grandiose and incomplete ruin in the making. "Under construction," say the guides without a trace of irony. I suppose they just keep two sets of mental books and live with the contradiction for now.

I saw exactly one picture of Marx and one of Lenin in my whole stay, but it's been a long time since ideology had anything to do with it. Not without cunning, Fat Man and Little Boy gradually mutated the whole state belief system into a debased form of Confucianism, in which traditional ancestor worship and respect for order become blended with extreme nationalism and xenophobia. Near the southernmost city of Kaesong, captured by the North in 1951, I was taken to see the beautifully preserved tombs of King and Queen Kongmin. Their significance in F.M.-L.B. cosmology is that they reigned over a then unified Korea in the 14th century, and that they were Confucian and dynastic and left many lavish memorials to themselves. The tombs are built on one hillside, and legend has it that the king sent one of his courtiers to pick the site. Second-guessing his underling, he then climbed the opposite hill. He gave instructions that if the chosen site did not please him he would wave his white handkerchief. On this signal, the courtier was to be slain. The king actually found that the site was ideal. But it was a warm day and he forgetfully mopped his brow with the white handkerchief. On coming downhill he was confronted with the courtier's fresh cadaver and exclaimed, "Oh dear." And ever since, my escorts told me, the opposite peak has been known as "Oh Dear Hill."

I thought this was a perfect illustration of the caprice and cruelty of absolute leadership, and began to phrase a little pun about Kim Jong Il being the "Oh Dear Leader," but it died on my lips. And there is more than just callousness and fatalism to the Confucian style. It was noticeable, during the visit of Kim Dae Jung, that Little Boy observed Confucian etiquette, deferring to his senior at all points and even respectfully adjusting his pace to that of the older man. Similarly, rather than seem too ambitious in taking the succession after his father's death, he delayed his assumption of formal power and decreed a three-year mourning period for the departed—the pious Confucian maximum. Even the two national flowers—the Kimilsungia and the Kimjongilia—reflect this relative modesty. The Kimilsungia is a gorgeous orchid. The Kimjongilia is a fairly humble member of the begonia family.

There is talk of building a direct road and rail link between Seoul and Pyongyang.

Still, the fervor and single-mindedness of this deification probably have no precedent in history. It's not like Duvalier or Assad passing the torch to the son and heir. It surpasses anything I have read about the Roman or Babylonian or even Pharaonic excesses. An estimated $2.68 *billion* was spent on ceremonies and monuments in the aftermath of Kim Il Sung's death. The concept is not that his son is his successor, but that his son is his *reincarnation.* North Korea has an equivalent of Mount Fuji—a mountain sacred to all Koreans. It's called Mount Paekdu, a beautiful peak with a deep blue lake, on the Chinese border. Here, according to the new mythology, Kim Jong Il was born on February 16, 1942. His birth was attended by a double rainbow and by songs of praise (in human voice) uttered by the local birds. In fact, in February 1942 his father and mother were hiding under Stalin's protection in the dank Russian city of Khabarovsk, but as with all miraculous births it's considered best not to allow the facts to get in the way of a good story.

It was once said of Prussia that it wasn't a country that had an army, but an army that had a country. And North Korea is a garrison state, a society organized for war. I took a trip on the Pyongyang subway (between the "Resurrection" stop and the "Glory" stop, both of them ornately decorated *à la Moscou*) and noticed that the escalator took me down to an almost thermonuclear depth; it's a bomb shelter. In the countryside are long and oddly straight roads with almost no vehicles on them; these must be emergency landing strips and airfields. You see military uniforms on about every 10th person. Partly this is a means of additional regimentation for the society, and partly it's a solution to the unemployment problem. (The Korean People's Army doesn't look so frightening when you see it stripped to the waist and digging ditches with worn-out tools, as I did on the road to Nampo, the country's main port.) But a gigantic part of the budget still goes for heavy weapons, missile technology, and nuclear power plants.

Like some Lilliput masquerading as Brobdingnag, North Korea likes to bluff the rest of the world and force it to ask, Would this regime be prepared to immolate itself and others to make a last, dying point? The baroque secrecy of the culture and the arcana of its rituals help to give the impression that it might be capable of anything. I witnessed the same "Mass Games" in the colossal May Day Stadium that were, a week or so later, put on to impress Madeleine Albright. Here is how the impression is created.

First, you have to picture the outcome of a 10-year collaboration between Busby Berkeley and Leni Riefenstahl. The entire floor of the amphitheater is suddenly filled with hypnotizing phalanxes of men, women, and children (proof on their own of a totally drilled society). With bewilderingly faultless choreography, and to the strains of kitsch light-opera music, people form and re-form into the shapes of Mount Paekdu—complete with blue lake—a raging sea, and a map of the Korean peninsula. On the other side of the arena, a wall of humanity executes the most expert and versatile flash-card displays, turning on a dime from a refulgent and embossed portrait of the Fat Man to a scene of flowers or factories. Every now and then, the sentimental and the folkloric are punctuated, to the accompaniment of massed searchlights and skull-splitting chords, by the image of a granite-jawed soldier with flamethrower and bayonet, or—and this was the climax—by that of a great rocket lofting into the sky. It was at this point that Little Boy turned to Albright with a smile and said, Don't worry. We won't test any more of them.

Was this a threat or a promise? Perhaps



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it was a bit of both. By behaving sullenly, North Korea has gotten attention and aid and even respect. But it remains Lilliput. Don't lose a sense of proportion: it could not conquer the South, which has more than twice its population, and it certainly could not govern the South even if it could conquer it. North Korea would actually be shattered into fragments and paved over once again if it even tried a war with the United States and its regional allies. And it would not have a friend in the world, which it did last time with the slightly reluctant support of Stalin and Mao. The whole "threat inflation" directed at this distraught Oz-like regime is either slightly paranoid or slightly cynical. The idea of America building a huge, hypothetical, costly "missile shield" to ward off Little Boy is an especial absurdity. His projectiles are antique and inaccurate, and he wouldn't live to see the first one splash down if he ever did decide to go mad.

But *is* he mad, as we used to be told he was? From a society and state where the human personality has been ruthlessly erased, and one individual character obscenely exalted, there arises a recurrent question. Are we dealing with a giggling and sadistic playboy, or with a slight oddball who has a bizarre and thwarted need to become a Hollywood *auteur,* and perhaps possesses latent Gorbachevian tendencies?

Again it could be both. South Korean intelligence blames Little Boy for the bombing of an airliner and for an explosion which killed several members of the South Korean Cabinet. These outrages occurred back in the 1980s, during the rule of Fat Man, so it doesn't seem likely that Little Boy could have been allowed to commit them on his own. What he did do, on his own initiative, was kidnap a South Korean movie star and have her brought to Pyongyang for his cinematic appreciation. The only people who can be said to "know" Kim Jong Il are Choi Un Hoi, whose screen performances so ravished and captivated him, and her husband, the director Shin Sang Ok. In 1978 they were snatched by Little Boy's agents in Hong Kong. The concept in the mind of the Dear Director was not a fate worse than death for the wife, but a collaboration on celluloid. Shin spent five years in a North Korean jail for refusing to make any propaganda movies; when released he was told he could have creative and artistic control. The couple spent some quality face time with their host, made him some films, and in 1983 managed to tape-record some of his table talk. So we know that he likes splatter movies (*Friday the 13th* is an all-time favorite), but also that he admires Liz Taylor and especially her work in *Butterfield 8.* He maintains lavish postproduction and dubbing facilities and is especially proud when he can get his name on a film credit, which he usually can.

He was also quite outspoken on matters political. The tape, which seems genuine, has him saying that, "after having experienced about 30 years of socialism, I feel we need to expand to the Western world to feed our people." He adds that the current system gives people no incentive to work, and that South Koreans have reached college level while North Koreans are still in kindergarten. However, he is aware that reforms would threaten the basis of his father's state. "When China opened up a bit, the first thing the people learned was not technology. Instead, the young people grew their hair long and grew mustaches. They were interested in superficial things. This stems from the emptiness of themselves, and the socialist system. We are in the same situation as China."

Choi and Shin's old kidnapper has since published a book—*Kim Jong Il on the Art of the Cinema*—a copy of which I was able to find (not without a searching glance from my minder) in a Pyongyang bookstore.

There's much turgid propaganda and boilerplate, but one or two heartfelt observations as well. Robert Altman could surely endorse the following:

> A film which merely aims to make a profit by showing off the stars' faces, cannot be real art. . . . There cannot be a genuine creative spirit, and the beautiful flower of art cannot bloom where actors sell their faces, and even their souls.

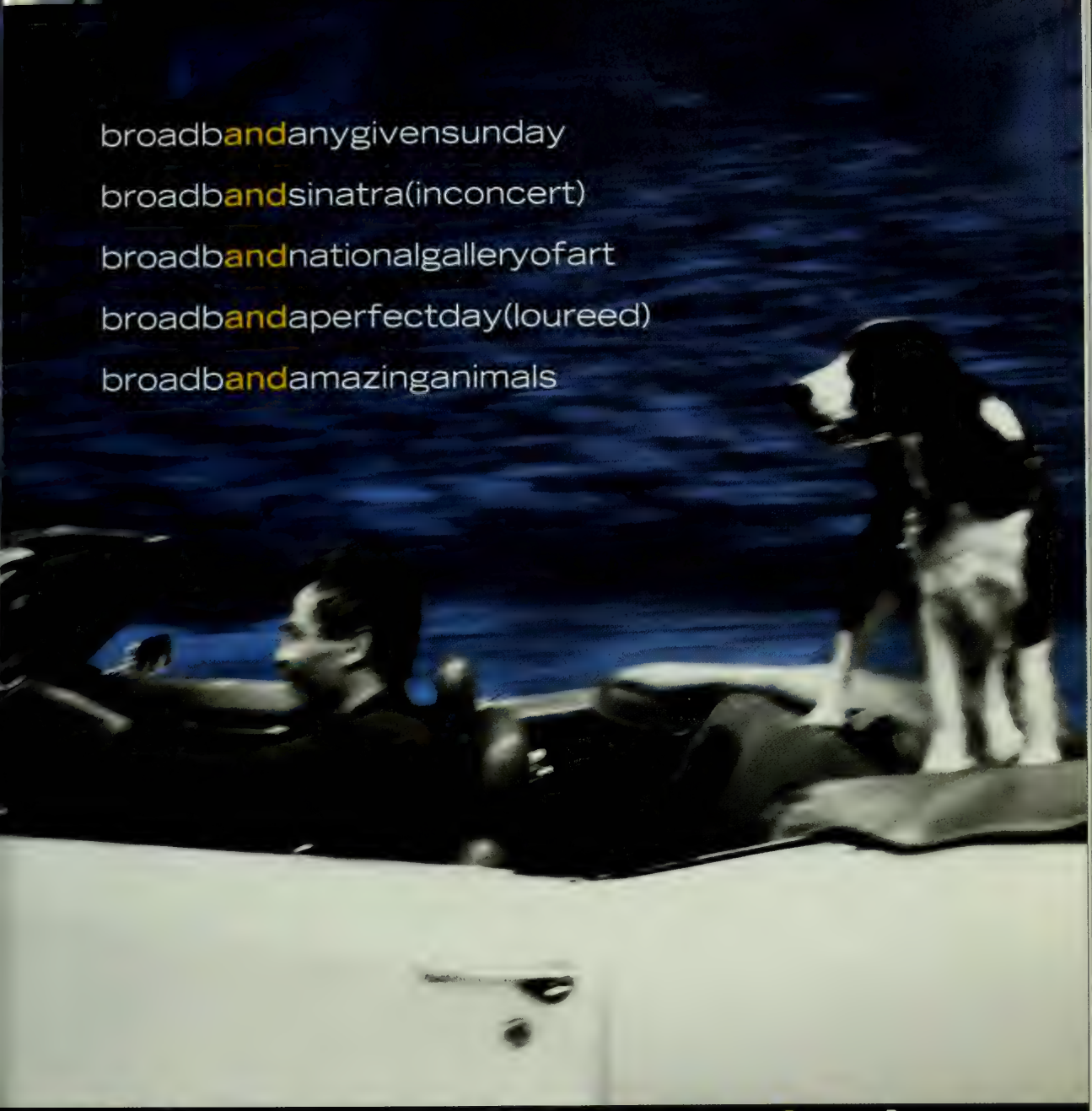
In another of his recent works, *Abuses of Socialism Are Intolerable,* Little Boy surprised me by confronting head-on the notion that Korean socialism was "totalitarian," "barracks-like," and "administrative and commanding." These words appear, with emphasis, on almost every page. Of course, the muscular prose of the master polemicist makes short work of the accusations. But most North Koreans are never permitted to know what the outside world thinks of their system. They are told instead that the rest of humanity pulses with love for Fat Man and Little Boy. Could there be a coded message here?

If so, it may not be the only one. The most hysterical and ridiculous and grandiose attempt to persuade the North Koreans that the whole world is with them is to be found in the "International Friendship Exhibition," a colossal marble pagoda among the beauties of Mount Myohyang, about two hours' drive north from the capital. Built at remorseless expense (and much of it underground, like a lot of North Korean institutions), it houses more than 61,000 gifts, bestowed on the Great Leader and the Dear Leader by foreign heads of state, delegations, and random celebrities. Every schoolchild is brought here at least once, to be assured that Kim Il Sung was an international statesman without peer.

On one level, it is a giant museum to the death of Communism and dictatorship. There are two huge railway carriages—one from Stalin and one from Mao—which commemorate the days when state socialism was something made of wrought iron. Vanished politicians and even vanished regimes are featured: here is a stuffed bear's head from Nicolae Ceausescu and a bust from East Germany. Capitalist despots are well represented, too, including Zia ul-Haq of Pakistan and General Suharto of Indonesia (who also presented a pair of



LOST IN THE TRANSLATION
The "On the Way to the Hotel" section of *Speak in Korean* contains the translation for, among other phrases, "Let's Mutilate US Imperialism!"



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chimps to the national zoo, where they joined a warthog from Robert Mugabe). Every now and then, amid the bric-a-brac of onyx ashtrays or mounted hunting rifles, one finds a gem. A silver box, with the CNN logo, from Ted Turner and Jane Fonda. An English version of Kim Il Sung's essays, with a foreword by Eldridge Cleaver, from Harrison Salisbury of *The New York Times*. A white crane sculpture, listed as given by "The Religious Leader of the United States." Who he? My inquiry is met with polite astonishment. Why, Billy Graham of course. He and his sons are here all the time.

The four entrance doors are made from solid copper and weigh four tons apiece. Shift 16 tons and whaddaya get? A stuffed crocodile, beamingly upright and proffering a cocktail tray, from the Sandinistas. I began to get the giggles, imagining that Kim Il Sung had thousands and thousands of dotty aunts and batty uncles, and had solemnly resolved to keep every one of their rubbishy birthday and Christmas presents in case they ever came to call.

However, in the smaller adjacent building, devoted to the gifts received by Little Boy, we find a whole new note being struck. Almost every present and tribute is from a foreign business. Plaques from British insurance companies are prominent, for some reason. Most astonishing, though, is the main room, which is given over to the trophies of the recent summit with Kim Dae Jung. Vast, shiny wide-screen TV sets and computer monitors, bearing the logos of Samsung and Daewoo. A limousine—interestingly called a Dynasty limousine—from Chung Ju Yung, the founder of Hyundai. Mr. Chung also gets his picture displayed, with a smiling Little Boy. The whole room is a shrine to consumer capitalism. What must the North Korean visitors think as they are paraded around the exhibits and shown goods they have never seen? Their faces give nothing away. But if this is not a hint about a possible future, perhaps along the lines of the "two Chinas," I don't know what would be.

Suppose we picture North Korea as a gigantic film set, with everyone a conscripted extra. The sole director feels he needs more scope. But he doesn't quite want to share power with the larger studio system, and thus sacrifice his autonomy. I went to the official film studios, which are nowhere near as luxurious as Little Boy's private facilities. They consist of a series of huge back lots populated by listless and bored people. On the whole expanse of one million square meters, nothing was being shot. The entire place wore an air of complete torpor. One abandoned set represented a street in Seoul, the South Korean capital, in the early 1960s. The street, intended obviously to suggest decadence, featured some bars and a brothel and a cinema advertising Marilyn Monroe in *The Seven Year Itch*. After spending some time in Pyongyang, I thought, Boy, I could use a little of *that*.

But then, quitting the back lots for downtown Pyongyang, I suddenly realized that the whole place is for show. It's an "as if" society. Uniformed female traffic cops do pirouettes at intersections, though there are no cars. Newspapers come out, though they contain no news. Restaurants produce menus of nonexistent dishes. At the airport, there are barely any planes. In the national art gallery—they understand that you have to *have* a national art gallery—almost all the paintings are of the same two people. In the Palace of Children—a forbidding structure with no play space—I found a class of tiny Koreans solemnly learning Morse code under the supervision of an adult. He unblinkingly beep-beeped and they doggedly transcribed the dots and dashes. Nobody has told them that the international community abandoned Morse two years ago.

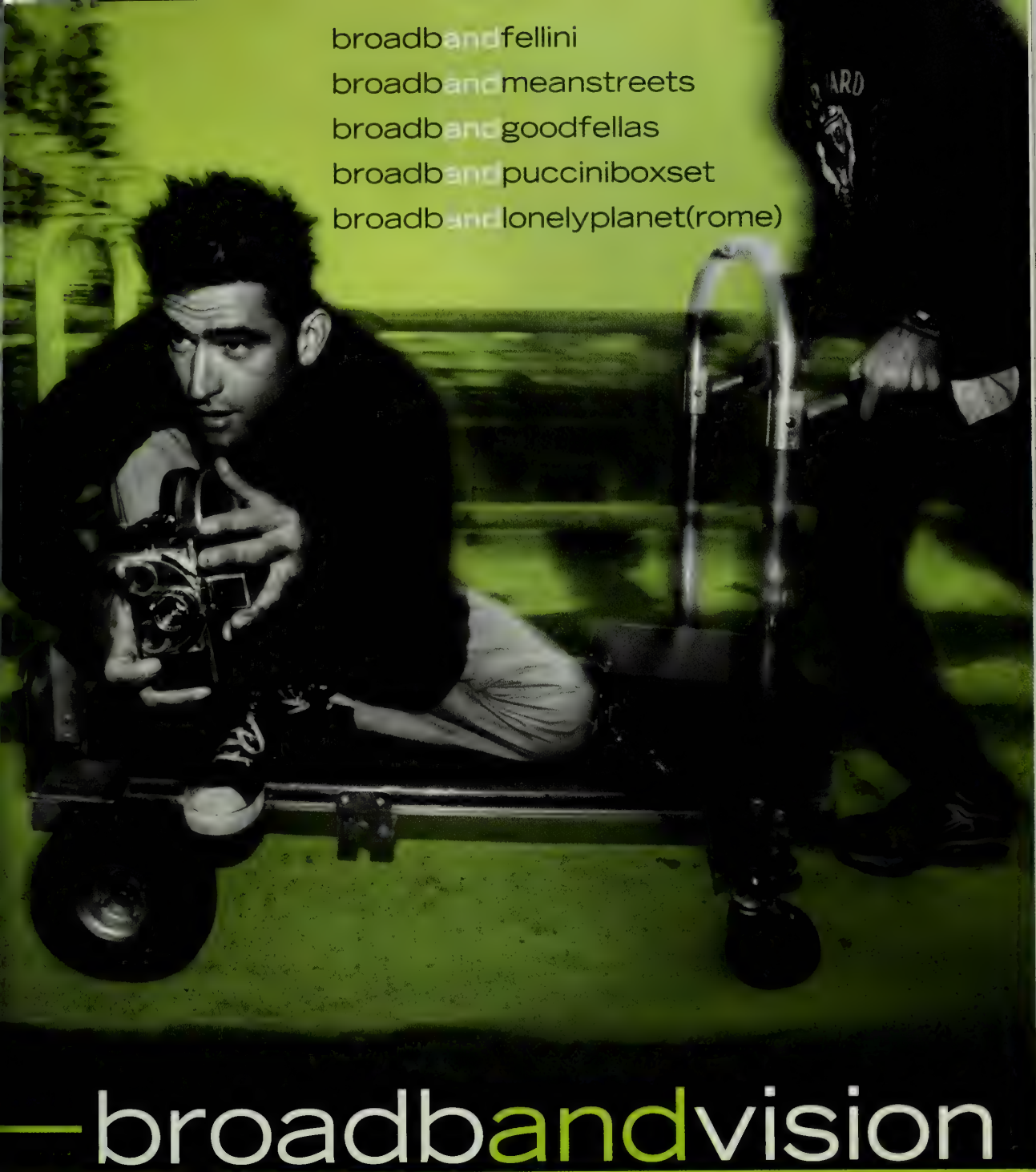


FACE THE NATION
At the main gate of the Kim Cheek Iron and Steel complex in Chongjin, a giant billboard depicts Kim Il Sung peering into a furnace, winter 1986.

The office of the presidency is "eternally" held by Kim Jong Il's adored and departed dad.

Worst of all was the Great People's Study Hall, a huge book depository erected on one side of Kim Il Sung Square. It cost, I was proudly told, $100 million. There are desks, card catalogues, shelves; it's free and open to the "public"—it's just what it would be like if Pyongyang had a public library. But almost all the books seemed to be by or about Fat Man and Little Boy, and though I was informed that there was an edition of *Les Misérables* in Korean, it couldn't be produced. (Why did they volunteer *that* one?) On every floor there is a room where, I was told, a professor sits and makes himself available for questions. I was even pointed to a door behind which such a professor sat. What a great idea! Since journalists are not allowed, I was visiting Pyongyang in my other guise, that of university lecturer. I asked if I could put a question to the professor. Instant panic. "There's no time—you'll miss the rest of the tour." No, that's O.K., I'm not in a hurry. "But he's a social-science professor." Fine—I've got just the question for him. "But he specializes in political economy." Good. After a lot of fluttering and (on my part) a certain smiling obstinacy, my guide knocked and opened the door. A small man looked up from behind a large desk. The desk was bare. He seemed *petrified*, as if caught masturbating or harboring impure thoughts about the Dear Leader. There was a long anxious exchange in Korean, after which I was told that, unfortunately, the professor answered only questions about Kim Il Sung as a geographer. I have to admit that I could not think of any, and I also realized that the man's discomfort was acute. "Such pity," said my guide soothingly. She meant "Such a pity," but I agreed nonetheless.

It would be nice to think that the menacing aspects of North Korea were for display also, that the bombs and reactors were Potemkin showcases or bargaining chips. On the plane from Beijing I met a group of unsmiling Texan types wearing baseball caps. They were the "in-country" team from the International Atomic Energy Agency, there to inspect and neutralize North Korea's plutonium rods. Not a nice job, but, as they say, someone has to do it. Speaking of the most controversial reactor at Yongbyon, one of the guys said, "No sweat. She's shut down now." Nice to know. But then, so is the rest of North Korean society shut down—animation suspended, all dead quiet on the set, endlessly awaiting not action (we hope) or even cameras, but light. □



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JAMES WOLCOTT



STAR SYSTEM
Sex and the City mastermind Darren Star and the leading ladies of his hit HBO series (from left, Kim Cattrall, Kristin Davis, Sarah Jessica Parker, and Cynthia Nixon).

TWINKLE, TWINKLE, DARREN STAR

With his HBO hit, *Sex and the City*, Darren Star stole the prime-time-soap crown from his former mentor, Aaron Spelling. Now Star's latest, *The Street*, takes an even more blatant walk on the testosterone side, and it sends the same chillingly subversive message

Darren Star, once the student prince of prime-time trash, has nabbed the throne. The creator and producer of *Sex and the City* (HBO), *Grosse Pointe* (WB), and *The Street* (Fox), Star not only has upstaged his former mentor—producer Aaron Spelling, whose sage brow has spun a bevy of melt-in-your-mind hits (*Love Boat, Charlie's Angels, Dynasty, 7th Heaven*)—but has dared mock his mentor's daughter, Tori, a star of *Beverly Hills 90210* and numerous made-for-TV movies (including one that raised the haunting question *Mother, May I Sleep with Danger?*). Angered by the caricature of a Tori-like actress in the *Grosse Pointe* pilot as a bionic scarecrow who got her job through nepotism, Spelling reportedly had a Yosemite Sam fit with the WB network, demanding they tone down this travesty and suggesting they hire his son, Randy, for the cast. Since Spelling's *7th Heaven* is the most popular show on the WB, his complaints were duly noted: a bulimia scene was snipped from the pilot, and the Tori-like clone underwent cosmetic alterations to remove obvi-

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ous similarities. The controversy, however, backfired against Spelling and provided a publicity boon for Star, raising the profile of *Grosse Point* in the press and giving it a buzz factor. Defying the advice of The Godfather, Star had taken sides against the family, and won.

Which is true in a larger sense as well. Spelling's upscale soaps—crowded with ruthless clotheshorses hopping from bed to bed, boardroom to boardroom (see his latest soap, NBC's *Titans,* where the entire cast gets stuck to Yasmine Bleeth's lips) rest upon a traditional bedrock. They rattle Barbie's dream house, but don't wreck the foundation. Once the storm clouds pass and everyone's face-lift has settled, the family, or at least the ideal of the family, survives intact. Star, however, is a slick subverter of family values and fuddy-duddy restraints. Marriage, in Star's work, is where a man's penis goes to die and where a woman enters mummyhood. His characters are say-anything, do-anything, screw-almost-anything hedonists who run in packs and compare notes over endless cocktails. His flair for cloaking subversion as naughty comedy—every closet is a jack-in-the-box with a kinky surprise—explains why his series are guilty pleasures for audiences and manna for the media elite, who love to tout transgression (from *Trainspotting* to Eminem) as long as they don't have to leave the office and exert themselves. The media elite approve of shock entertainment on principle, as a stun gun to give prudes and high-minded scolds a spaz attack. Take that, Bill Bennett! Writhe in bony agony, Dr. Laura! Always on the lookout for surrogates, editors have made the *Sex and the City* stars their Spice Girls, emboldening Star to unleash his Spice Guys in *The Street*—those stallions.



STAR'S GALAXY
Clockwise from above: the cast of *Beverly Hills 90210;* Heather Locklear on *Melrose Place;* Mariel Hemingway on *Central Park West;* the *Grosse Pointe* cast; the ubiquitous *Sex and the City* stars.

His characters are say-anything, do-anything, screw-almost-anything hedonists.

A graduate of U.C.L.A., Star earned his wonder-boy reputation as a writer and producer on Spelling's *Beverly Hills 90210* and its spin-off *Melrose Place,* injecting youth hormones into the Spelling formula of catfights and power plays among the overdressed. Where *Beverly Hills 90210* at first emphasized family (a Midwest clan trying to acclimate to L.A.), *Melrose Place,* based on Star's experiences living in a motel-like West Hollywood apartment complex, pitted underdressed, unattached singles against one another in a survival of the fittest. (Or, given how many bare midriffs were on display, the flattest.) Instead of *Dynasty's* Krystle and Alexis plunging into the fountain, it was shopping-mall hottie Heather Locklear leading the hair-pulling contests. Over-the-top dialogue was delivered with a knowing smirk; the characters didn't so much speak as meow in complete sentences. The Oedipal tussle between Spelling and his protégé began when Star decided to leave the world of valet parking behind and produce a series for CBS as glittering as the Manhattan skyline reflected in Holly Golightly's dazzled eyes, *Central Park West.* Spelling reportedly threatened to sue, claiming that Star was violating his contractual duties as consultant for *Melrose Place* by relocating east. But Star was adamant, defiant. He needed to prove to himself and the naysayers ready to knife him in the pages of *Daily Variety* that he could create 24-carat schlock of his own.

Premiering in the 1995 fall season, *Central Park West* failed to grant Star his wish. Featuring Mariel Hemingway as an idealistic editor in chief, Tom Verica as her goateed-novelist husband, Mädchen Amick as a vampish marriage-wrecker who drew on her cigarettes in a slow race with death, and Ron Leibman, working his jaws like a tractor's shovel, as a rapacious mogul, this glossy soap was set in the backstabbing corridors of *Communiqué* magazine, and like so many TV programs set in magazine offices (*Anything but Love, Suddenly Susan, The Naked Truth*), it managed to get everything painstakingly wrong. (You could staff an aircraft carrier with all the extras milling around in the background.) The absence of believability wouldn't have mattered if the show hadn't seemed so damned impressed with itself. Flaunting its inside status, *Central Park West* seemed oddly, instantly dated, a late by-product of the 80s fiction of Jay McInerney and Bret Easton Ellis, with their ticker tape of dropped names, designer labels, and hot clubs. Despite extensive promotion and splashy launch parties, the show was an immediate turnoff for viewers. The ratings hit the wall with the first episode,

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| WITH JOHN GOODMAN |

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panic ensued, and the show underwent so many emergency makeovers that by the end it had gone fully retro, pitting Raquel Welch against Lauren Hutton in a Krystle-Alexis smackdown. After much sputtering, Darren Star's dreamchild was put out of its misery. The prodigal son had laid an egg.

Sex and the City, launched in the summer of 1998, put him back in orbit. Adapting Candace Bushnell's book for cable, Star didn't have to conform to network standards or worry about upsetting advertisers. He made canny use of the freedom that cable offers, extending the humpy nudity of HBO's *Dream On* into slapstick with social content. As in *Central Park West,* the Manhattan of *Sex and the City* is an L.A. vision of N.Y.'s *la dolce vita,* paradise seen through sunglasses. Where the real New York is more stop-start, gear-grinding, and workaholic, this L.A.-N.Y. is a city of swoosh and flow, a rolling carpet of leisure devoted to shopping, clubbing, and casual pickups. Money is as vital an element here as it is in Aaron Spelling's TV world (which, to borrow a phrase from George W. Bush, can be divided into "the haves and the have-mores") but a more subtle one. Wealth in *Dynasty* or *Titans* balloons in gobs of tasteless extravagance; in *Sex and the City,* it's an invisible current that seems to loft the characters from one SoHo shop to another like an endless line of credit. As a Cosmo-girl fantasy, *Sex and the City* can be fun. Its fab four—Carrie (Sarah Jessica Parker), a sex columnist who poses Charlie Chan riddles to her readers (Is anal sex the oral sex of the 90s? Is monogamy the new infidelity?); Miranda (Cynthia Nixon), a lawyer and latent rage-aholic; Charlotte (Kristin Davis), a gumdrop who runs an art gallery; and Samantha (Kim Cattrall), publicist by day, party favor by night—have an easy rapport, the booby traps sprung on them rival *Seinfeld's,* and the show moves at a light, brisk clip. If it were on network TV, it would land in the mid to upper range of sitcoms, in the vicinity of *Just Shoot Me* and *Will & Grace.* But it's being treated as much more than a lively comedy—it's being hyped as an R-rated *Zagat's* for the *Zeitgeist,* its good points overblown and its bad points ignored. The praise for *Sex and the City* has become a feedback loop of self-flattery.

The sense of entitlement that underwrites the characters' existence results in a clique mentality that the audience is assumed to share. Uncool outsiders can be treated with lightning contempt, as in the episode in which Carrie, asked to consider volunteer literacy work, snaps, "I'm a sex columnist—what am I supposed to do, teach 'em how to write about blow jobs?" (We're supposed to sympathize because the charity group is composed of snooty socialites.) Nasty toads spring from the tongue of Cattrall's Samantha, whose compulsive sex talk has become a form of Tourette's syndrome, made worse by her "witty" manner. (In one episode she even trots out the old line "I'm trisexual—I'll try anything once.") Enthusiasts cite *Sex and the City* as a cheeky example of female empowerment, but it's spiked with female self-loathing, which surfaces not only from Samantha's foul mouth but in the characters' constant drinking ("Half a flask of Jim Beam later, Sean and I had finally broken the ice") and Carrie's freakish wardrobe, whose mismatched colors and hideous accessories give her the fashion sense of a hooker fresh out of clown college. On their present course, the *Sex and the City* women will become as shipwrecked as the wigged-out pair on *Absolutely Fabulous.*

A lot of gay men loved *Ab Fab* because its stars had a campy abandon. *Sex and the City* also has a following among gay men who recognize themselves in the show's bump-and-run dynamics. In one episode, Charlotte dressed in a business suit, applied a mustache, and stuffed a sock in her pants to release her "inner man." All of the women on *Sex and the City* have inner men, because that's what they are. "They all go to the gym, have sex, drink Cosmos, and shop. They are gay men," an entertainment attorney told *New York* magazine in a survey of the show's gay fans titled "Sex Maniacs." A gay editor observed, "They use all this gay terminology on the show, like 'fuck buddy,'" and another fan argued, "The idea of Mr. Big"—Carrie's rich on-again, off-again lover, played by Chris Noth—"is a gay man's fantasy." According to *New York's* informal poll, the most popular *Sex and the City* bachelorette is Samantha, the biggest tramp, ergo "the most gay-man of them all." Samantha also has links to the drag-queen community, one of her former beaux having forsaken her for panty hose. The show's most recent season ended with a roof party in which Samantha played hostess to a group of black pre-op transsexual prostitutes who had been loudly plying their trade under her window in the Meatpacking District. The scene became a combination you-go-girl pep rally/outreach program, the implication being that these chicks-with-dicks were the real sistahs.

"It's a good thing she got married—the woman's an idiot."
—Carrie on *Sex and the City.*

Filtering women's lives through a gay prism creates a warp effect. The issue isn't whether gay writers and producers can't create believable female characters with crossover appeal. They can and do, as the popularity of *Sex and the City* proves. But the show goes beyond gender-bender peekaboo, peddling an updated 70s agenda of sexual liberation: a refresher course in *Fear of Flying.* Its heavy turnover in buff bods may make some gays feel better about their extracurriculars—"It's refreshing to see that it's not just us fags who are sleeping around," an interviewee told *New York*—but how healthy a lifestyle is that to peddle to women? (How healthy it is for gay men is a separate issue.) *Time's* cover story on single women featured a babe shot of the stars headlined WHO NEEDS A HUSBAND? Leaving aside the inconvenient fact that three of the four stars are in committed relationships, the resounding answer is: Carrie and company do—they're a mess. *Sex and the City* doesn't dodge the pitfalls of being on the constant prowl. It's done rueful episodes discussing AIDS tests, how women sabotage their love lives, and the pathos of ordering Chinese takeout in your lonely apartment. But these are hiccups and shrewd hedges in the show's campaign to glamorize promiscuity and mindless gratification—"The best kind," I can almost hear Samantha purr before gargling with Listerine—at the expense of anything lasting. The show imposes the Peter Pan complex on both sexes.

The Manhattan of Star's *Sex and the City* is an L.A. vision of N.Y.'s *la dolce vita.*

Men and women who opt out of the meat market on *Sex and the City* become infantilized, unable to cope, pathetic. "Big" is married only a few months to a sleek arm-trophy before he cracks, scurrying back to Carrie (a sop to female vanity). Carrie enters a serious relationship with a Nice Guy (so nice, you know it can't last) and becomes such a distracted ninny that she can't take his dog for a walk without losing the animal. Charlotte's rich, well-bred fiancé—played by Kyle Maclachlan—is so overwhelmed at the prospect of marriage that he's unable to flog an erection. He wears a kilt to the wedding, but beneath the tartan, no Loch Ness monster stirs. (Poor Maclachlan: first the lap dance in *Showgirls,* now this.) Marriage is a jail whose inmates

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are paroled only if they promise to misbehave. The sweet lie of *Sex and the City* is that all you really need in life are friends who are "there" for you. They're the support system to get you through those tough hours between orgasms.

"After spending a lot of time thinking about women, it was nice to do a show from a guy's point of view."

Darren Star, quoted in the *Daily News* TV supplement, *Vue.*

There's nothing so invigorating to the creative process as a suggested penis. A flurry of possible scenarios are fired off in rapid succession....

Then the eureka moment strikes. "When I was at First Boston," says one of the writers, "we used to stand behind our desks, unzip our flies and challenge the guy next to us by saying, 'So, what are you packing?'"

Eyebrows arch. Much frantic scribbling on yellow legal pads.

"Guys could speculate on the size of somebody's Johnson."

"People could take positions."

"Short or long."...

A plot is developing. A silly, fantastical, riotous plot. Darren Star smiles.

—A brainstorming session for *The Street,* recorded by Rene Chun in *Details.*

The gay subtext and aversion to the feminine realm are carried over with a vengeance to Star's new series *The Street* (Fox), where everything covert in *Sex and the City* is made tumescent, Star no longer being obliged to channel gay libido through the neuroses of female sleep-arounds. In just five minutes, the script, by Star and the aptly named Jeff Rake, tattoos its stud stockbrokers as gay predators in straight guise, feeding an amazing amount of coded behavior, decoy maneuvers, and innuendo into its character introductions. The first episode opens with stockbroker Jack Kenderson (Tom Everett Scott) receiving an oral wake-up call from his fiancée as he listens to the market news. When she brags about making more money than he does (she's a banker), he sniffs his armpit and says, "What a lucky girl I am." That armpit sniff, which seems at first to be a throwaway bit of actorish business, is actually part of the show's signature scent—its male-animal aroma. After hopping back into bed for a quickie, Jack is shown striding purposefully through the financial district, primed for a busy day of gouging widows and orphans. At the elevator he grabs a familiar ass in gripping close-up. The ass belongs to fellow broker Freddie Sacker (Rick Hoffman), who, catching a whiff of his friend's odor, remarks, "You here to work or get laid?" With an inscrutable Keir Dullea expression, Jack replies, "Is that a proposition?" A fetching blonde standing nearby also notes Jack's scent, calling it musky. "I guess it is," he says with deadpan aplomb, since he and we know it's Pure Postcoital Money-Lovin' Monkey Funk.

On the elevator Freddie ribs Jack for denying himself future access to such cute tail by getting engaged. "Marriage is a crutch, my friend. It's a safety net for those who know they're never going to do any better." Crowded into the same car is a raven-haired beauty (Jennifer Connelly) who feels something pressing against her from behind. It's Freddie, or at least a fraction of him. With a loud whisper and lewd pause, he announces, "This elevator's not the only thing that's going . . . up." *The Street* is so absurdly phallic that when another broker has an affair with a stripper who wears a strap-on, it seems inevitable—even the women on this show are packing. The series debut involved an I.P.O. for a company marketing Ivy League semen and eggs. "Yale sperm is worth more than Penn sperm, and anyone can tell you that," one entrepreneur says. When the stock explodes, the trading floor erupts into a victory dance. Converting desirable sperm into money: in the Darren Star universe, that's the ultimate gusher.

For all its rah-rah cinematics, *The Street* suffers from a dearth of rooting interest, despite a few sympathetic characters among its vile bodies. Part of this can be chalked up to the nature of the stock-market genre itself, where hyperactivity and pounding soundtrack rhythms compensate for the lack of direct, personal action. Glued to their consoles, traders rattle off urgent gibberish like a submarine crew preparing a nuclear strike. As stock prices stream across the screen (15¾ . . . 16⅛), we're supposed to feel the excitement of a close race, but it's one thing to be rooting for the horse, another to be rooting for the bettors in the stands. (The horse is doing all the work.) Adding to the alienation effect is the thicket of attitude-swagger-bustle that shuttles to and fro like racks of coats in the Garment District. This hectic congestion may reflect the excessive expectations placed upon *The Street,* the stress of having as much money riding on the show as in it. According to an item in *The New York Observer,* Michael Ovitz's Artists Television Group is backing *The Street* to the tune of more than $600,000 per episode, which, on top of the $10 million already paid to Star as part of a three-year deal, makes for a sizable bet on greed as a voyeuristic spectacle. This could account for the show's hard sell, but it doesn't explain the animosity that seems to shove everything else aside. The misanthropy of *The Street* doesn't seem to have a personal wellspring; it's too pat, too automatic.



STREET WALKERS *The Street* co-stars Tom Everett Scott and Jennifer Connelly strike a sultry pose.

Everything covert in Star's *Sex and the City* is made tumescent in *The Street.*

Gotcha journalism has been joined by gotcha entertainment. Just as the sitcom has degenerated into a sparring ring of personal insult—a hazing ritual with a laugh track (witness CBS's *Welcome to New York,* which has brought dismay to the fans of Christine Baranski)—TV dramas have turned humiliation into an indoor sport. The debut episode of David E. Kelley's new series, *Boston Public* (Fox), was an even cruder blast of bombast than *The Street,* students and teachers alike tormented, pilloried. In the depths of the Depression, Hollywood films didn't dish out the spite, arrogance, snobbery, and petty sadism that we're getting now in a period of unprecedented prosperity and sexual license. The Clinton boom seems to have heightened the disdain and constricted the sympathies of those in the winners' circle, whatever liberal politics they profess. Never have so many pretty people behaved so rotten. What comes through in the coarsest moments of Darren Star's and David E. Kelley's shows is an impatient contempt for losers. Anyone who isn't sexy doesn't belong. The race belongs to the thin. □

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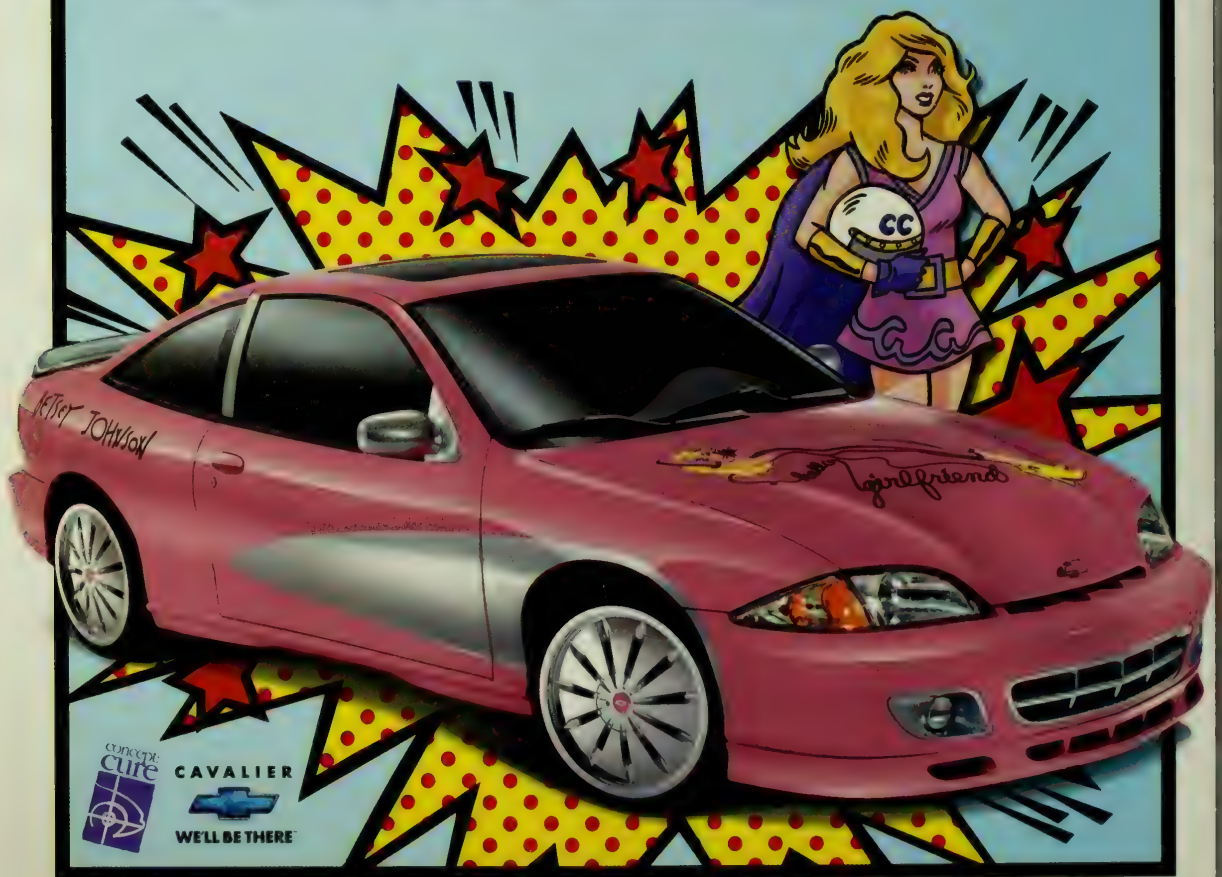
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VANITIES



Clive Owen

OCCUPATION: Actor. **AGE:** 36. **PROVENANCE:** Coventry, England. **SUCCESSFULLY CROSSED THE POND IN:** *Croupier*, an English art-house film that was last summer's surprise indie hit Stateside. "I've always had a pretty decent career here, but *Croupier* is the first thing that's really broken in the U.S. for me." **THEN HOLLYWOOD TOOK NOTICE:** "I didn't realize the impact of *Croupier* until I went out there and people were genuinely enthusiastic. Nobody even knows about the film in England." **NOW HE'S A PLAYER:** "I'm about to start shooting *The Bourne Identity* with Matt Damon, and it looks like I'll be doing a film with Robert Altman." **BUT IF YOU CAN'T WAIT UNTIL THEN:** Owen can be seen in March on PBS in the mini-series *Second Sight*, as "a policeman who discovers he's losing his sight and tries to cover it up," and later this year with Helen Mirren in *Greenfingers*. "It's about a group of prisoners who become champion gardeners and end up competing at a posh flower show."

KRISTA SMITH

PHOTOGRAPH BY JULIAN BROAD



STERN, BABY, STERN!
Designer, artist, promoter, sometime rock singer, and devoted bassist Molly Stern in one of her creations, photographed at her New York City studio. *Inset*, Stern's Motorola StarTac poised to dial actress Heather Graham (No. 10).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARC JOSEPH

SPEED DIAL MOLLY STERN

"I love heavy metal," exclaims 28-year-old fashion designer and creative consultant Molly R. Stern, talking about music's influence on her deconstructed designs. As the woman behind M.R.S. (her middle name is Rebecca), a New York–based women's clothing line she started in 1998, Stern has gained a following of actors, models, and musicians and has the speed dial to prove it. Among her high-profile dialees are supermodel du jour Gisele Bündchen (No. 11) and actress-model-musician Milla Jovovich (No. 12), both devotees of Stern's fashions. But the first call of the day on her Motorola StarTac is always placed to Jennifer Venditti (No. 1), a casting director who is Stern's business partner in another venture, 8 Alliance, a firm specializing in artist promotion. "When I made my first eight shirts, Jennifer said, 'Holy shit, you're onto something!'" and Stern's clothes found their way into Fred Segal (No. 5), the trendsetting Los Angeles boutique, and Hedra Prue (No. 6), Anna Kim's hip Nolita shop. In keeping with Stern's mantra, "No man is an island," she credits attorney Jeff Carton (No. 4) with "translating my 'I want to change the world' philosophy into dollar signs." Stern depends as well on Rosen & Chadick (No. 7), a fabric supplier who approached her after her very first show and "are down with me for no reason, so I have to give them a shout-out." Also a push button away is Main Drag Music (No. 8), a Brooklyn shop where Stern finds accessories for her baby-blue Fender Squire electric bass, a gift from fellow bassist and former member of Hole Melissa Auf Der Maur (No. 9). Most recently with the now defunct Smashing Pumpkins, Auf Der Maur is Stern's "muse" and was the first to wear an M.R.S. design onstage "with loud rock music surrounding it." Perhaps the *R* in "M.R.S." ought to stand for Rock. —SIOBHAN McDEVITT

NIGHT TABLE READING



LEO MULLIN
chairman and C.E.O., Delta Airlines

Nothing Like It in the World: The Men Who Built the Transcontinental Railroad 1865–1869,
by Stephen Ambrose (Simon & Schuster).
"Ambrose's book sparked an aviation thought: we have to harness that same pioneering vision to support our nation's growing demand for air travel. A progressive vision prevailed then; a progressive vision should prevail now."

ZAC GOLDSMITH
editor, The Ecologist

Ancient Futures: Learning from Ladakh,
by Helena Norberg-Hodge. (Sierra Club Books).
"As moving as it is eye-opening. You will never look at the world in the same way again."



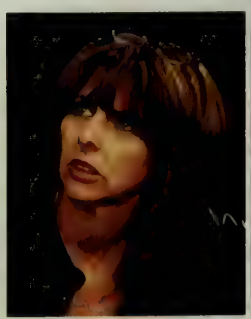


GRANDMASTER FLASH
music director/house D.J., The Chris Rock Show; *hip-hop pioneer*

How to Know God: The Soul's Journey into the Mystery of Mysteries,
by Deepak Chopra (Harmony).
"It discusses God in a biblical and logical context, sort of 'how He thinks.' God has given human beings the power of choice, and we can radically change our lives from good to bad or bad to good at a moment's notice. That's the way God shows his love."

NANCY MEYERS
director, What Women Want

Shopgirl: A Novella,
by Steve Martin (Hyperion).
"Steve Martin's observations are beautifully detailed in this novella that takes you on a private tour of an unfulfilled relationship between a shopgirl and the wealthy businessman who desires her. The shopgirl ultimately survives their breakup, but as I read it, I constantly wonder about men and what it is they're after."



DRI-FIT SEAMLESS TANK

Starsky and Such

A 70s dealership grows in Brooklyn

New York now has many first-rate Mexican restaurants. It continues to boast an impressive array of police scandals. But one area in which the city must still take a backseat to Los Angeles is in the matter of muscle cars. Stand on a corner in Manhattan and you will see taxicabs and dial cars, Explorers and BMWs, Saturns and Camrys—but rarely a Trans Am or Camaro, let alone a 'Vette. How does anyone in this city expect to get laid?

Lighting a candle rather than cursing this darkness are Christian Camargo and Todd Ashley, two New York gearheads who have opened a dealership in Williamsburg devoted to the more stylishly virile sorts of cars turned out by Detroit in the 1960s and 70s. Camargo, 29, and Ashley, 32, stress that their new enterprise, named Fast Ashleys, isn't a traditional showroom but rather a "car gallery," which means, in Camargo's words, "it acts like a real dealership, but not stuffy."

By trade, Camargo is an actor. Ashley is the more experienced partner, having managed a Škoda dealership in Prague (the Škoda is the Czech national car). At Fast Ashleys, where for the time being everything sells for under $20,000, the cars have in most cases been bought from original owners in Arizona and Southern California; Barstow is said to be a particularly fertile hunting ground. A recent visit to Williamsburg found such wonders as a white 1964 Riviera (with dual ashtrays and gold sheepskin upholstery) and a 1971 Ranchero painted canary yellow ("our loudest car"). The *pièce de résistance* arguably was a 1973 Ford Torino—the car favored by Starsky and Hutch, who drove a '74 model. This specimen was prized not just for its paint job, a shade of green that lay somewhere between metallic pea soup and avocado fleck, but also for its shag carpet and eight-track-tape player. The provenance: "It was this guy's high-school car," says Ashley, "but his daughter didn't want it, and so he sold it."

Living in places like Barstow, one might be excused for not realizing that 30-year-old Torinos have become cool again, swept up in a 70s wave that has also returned Shaun Cassidy iron-ons and crocheted bikini tops to shore, or at least to Bendel's. You can't help but admire an era when macho cars aspired to look like penises instead of, as with today's S.U.V.'s, oversize tackle boxes. "Craftsmanship is so great on these cars," says Camargo, gesturing at his stock. "To make a car like that Trans Am would cost $100,000 today. The Riviera's interior is all chrome, but for the price of a new Prizm"—that would be around $11,000 on the low end—"you can have it."

—BRUCE HANDY



I WANT MUSCLE
Muscle-car mavens Christian Camargo and Todd Ashley with a 1977 Pontiac Trans Am beneath the Brooklyn Bridge.





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VANITIES

EDWIN COASTER

11/19/00

Dear Graydon:

Enclosed are the galleys to The Edwin John Coaster Reader: 1956-2001, my long-awaited anthology collection. Even though it's all previously published material, I'm sure you'll want to excerpt something from it. Might I suggest "Die, Gerry, Die!," the controversial '76 New West piece that I wrote as an interior monologue of Squeaky Fromme? Or "Seuss Is for Faggots," the New York Review screed that started my famous literary feud with Ted Geisel? Whichever you choose, please count the excerpt as two features against my contract.

Best regards,

Ed

P.S. You mentioned some months ago that you'd be happy to write the intro to my collection. I've taken the liberty of writing it for you. (See enclosure.) Just make whatever tweaks you want and sign off on it.

P.P.S. Could you pass my galleys on to Dominick and ask him to blurb?

INTRODUCTION: THE GENIUS OF EDWIN JOHN COASTER
BY GRAYDON CARTER

In the frosty Canadian burg where I was raised, pleasure came hard. I might have killed myself, in fact, were it not for the balm that reading provided my chapped soul. And there was no writer who delivered me further from my uninspired existence than Edwin John Coaster, the fearless young maverick whose debut novel of the Korean War, In a Green Pink Country, set literary conventions alight like so much tired newsprint to a howitzer flame; whose rule-breaking dispatches from Vietnam electrified the journalistic firmament like a giant toaster set afloat in John Hay Whitney's marble bathtub. Like many a youth of my day, I dreamed of being Ed Coaster, of smelling the gunpowder and feeling the bourbon and cutting the figure and pulling the broads. Imagine the thrill, then, of years later becoming the editor of Vanity Fair and not only meeting Ed Coaster but becoming his friend, colleague, and near equal! These collected writings are but a sampling of the genius over which I've salivated – a Coaster tasting menu, if you will. Bon appétit, and if you're still hungry afterward (as I always am!), go out and buy all his other books.

[your signature here, Gray]

The Coaster Correspondence

More of the very expensive words of Edwin John Coaster, contributing editor



ILLUSTRATION BY TIM SHEAFFER

EDWIN COASTER

11/30/00

Dear Graydon:

I must say I was taken aback by the sour, unsporting tone of your most recent letter, particularly your assertions that (A) you never agreed to write the introduction to my book; (B) my proposed introduction fails to approximate your voice adequately; (C) a book excerpt doesn't count as an article against my contract, particularly when it's "shit that was published somewhere else a million years ago"; (D) Vanity Fair has no intention of excerpting anything from The Edwin John Coaster Reader; and (E) "we may be facing a default situation pretty soon as regards your $400,000 contract." "Default situation," eh? Hasn't Hollywood made you grand!

Anyway, in the absence of any enthusiasm on your part for any of my story suggestions (and I still don't see what you have against my Bangkok-brothel-trawl idea), I've got a killer concept of a different sort. You know how they have those New Yorker cruises, where Mr. and Mrs. Omaha get to hobnob with Roger Angell and David Denby aboard the U.S.S. Middlebrow? Well, why don't we have a series of Vanity Fair cruises? A little yarn spinning and buffet grazing with our people! You could give 'em a Hollywood slide show, I could tell 'em some 'Nam stories, Annie Leibovitz could take everyone's picture, and then we could spook 'em all real good by pitching the ship starboard, killing all the lights, and wheeling Sebastian Junger out for scary shipwreck stories! It's a fuckin' layup, my friend! And it would count as two features against my contract.

Best regards (despite everything),

Ed

P.S. Dominick won't blurb my book. Evidently he still hasn't forgiven me for the drunken scene I made at his Patroon party for The Way We Lived Then. (What can I say? I thought it was funny to greet Charlie Rose as "Burden's white man"!) Anyway, could you pass on those galleys to Gail Sheehy and see if she'll blurb? And if she won't bite, can you try Bryan Burrough? Also Marie Brenner? Margolick? Biskind? Hell, at this point I'll settle for Hitchens!



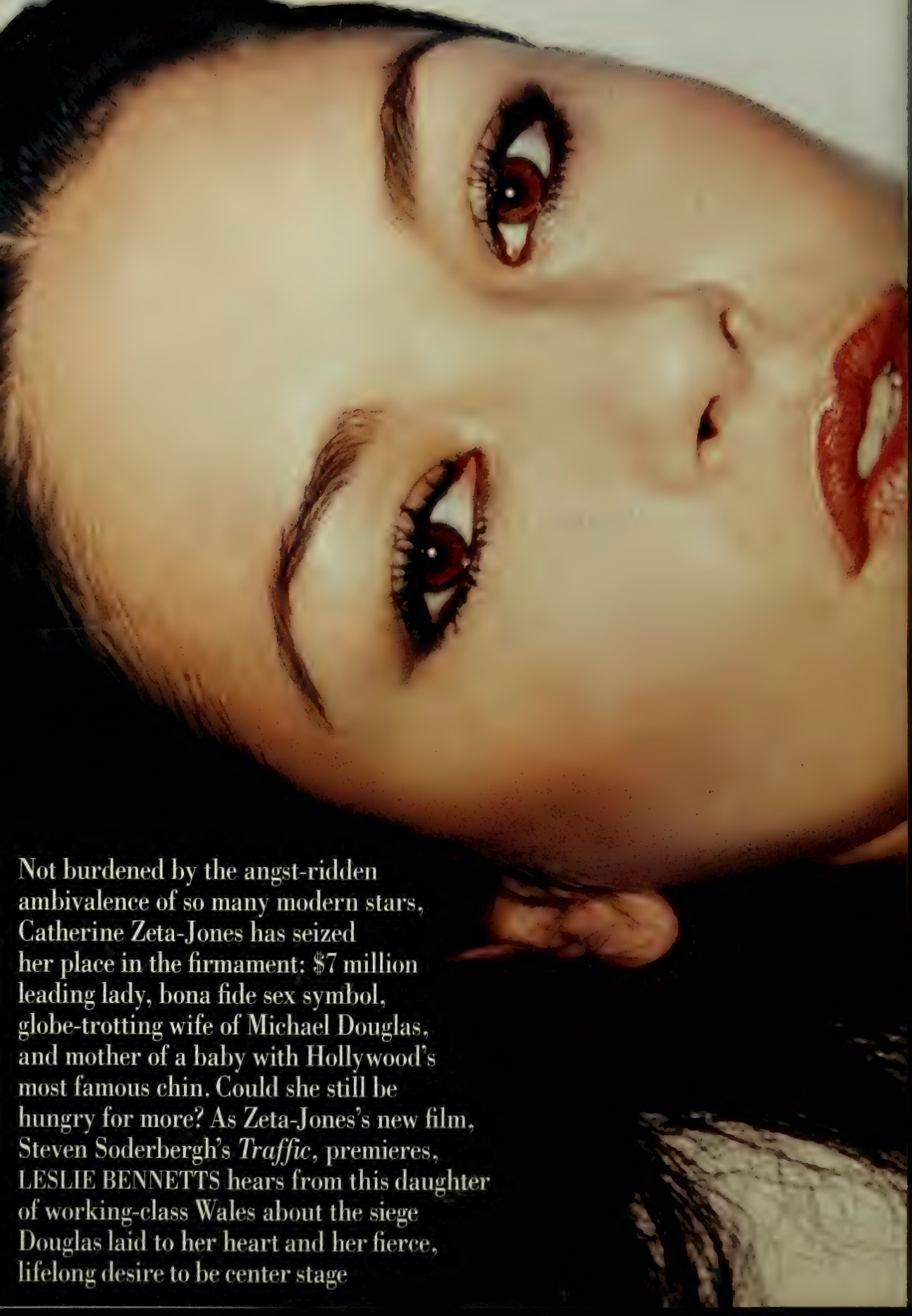
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Not burdened by the angst-ridden ambivalence of so many modern stars, Catherine Zeta-Jones has seized her place in the firmament: $7 million leading lady, bona fide sex symbol, globe-trotting wife of Michael Douglas, and mother of a baby with Hollywood's most famous chin. Could she still be hungry for more? As Zeta-Jones's new film, Steven Soderbergh's *Traffic*, premieres, LESLIE BENNETTS hears from this daughter of working-class Wales about the siege Douglas laid to her heart and her fierce, lifelong desire to be center stage

VANITY FAIR
JANUARY 2001

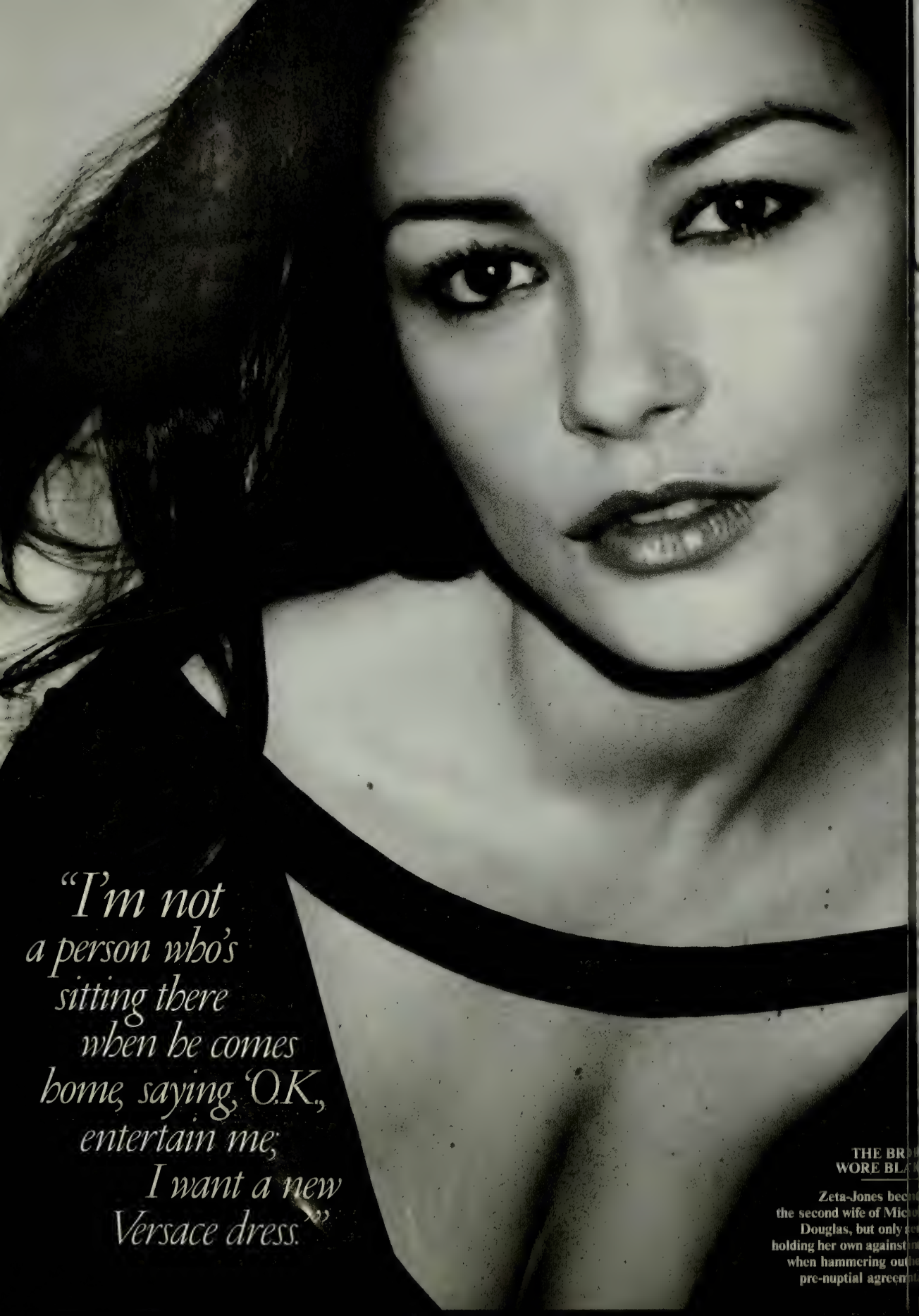


IT WOMAN

Catherine Zeta-Jones's combination of sex and toughness puts her in a class with the stars of Hollywood's golden age. She was photographed in Manhattan on October 30, 2000.

Glamour, Without Apologies

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARIO TESTINO • STYLED BY POLLY MELLEN



"I'm not a person who's sitting there when he comes home, saying 'O.K., entertain me; I want a new Versace dress.'"

THE BR... WORE BL...

Zeta-Jones bec... the second wife of Mic... Douglas, but only ... holding her own against ... when hammering out ... pre-nuptial agreem...

She is smiling like the Cheshire Cat—and why not? In the vast living room, a long wall of windows offers up New York City's most prized view—Central Park flanked by the dazzling panorama of the Manhattan skyline, the centerpiece of the palatial apartment she now presides over. On her ring finger is a diamond the size of a grape. ("That's not an engagement ring, it's a paperweight, for Chrissake!" exclaimed one friend.) And in her arms, in baby blue and cooing on cue, is her three-month-old son, the heir to Hollywood's most famous chin.

Catherine Zeta-Jones has every reason to be happy these days. Three years ago she was a virtual unknown, at least on this side of the Atlantic. Then she won a role in *The Mask of Zorro,* a good-humored romp starring Antonio Banderas and Sir Anthony Hopkins. Her part wasn't enormous, but her sword fight with Banderas was such a sizzler that everyone in Hollywood sat up and took notice. With her almond-shaped eyes, cascading raven hair, and voluptuous curves, Zeta-Jones was the very picture of a Spanish spitfire, even if she is a Welsh girl from a tiny fishing village called Mumbles. ("Black Welsh," Zeta-Jones says, "like black Irish.") And as Banderas's carefully aimed swordplay snipped away at her flimsy white negligee, revealing ever more of her luscious body, Zeta-Jones's career took off like a rocket. Men reacted as if they'd received an electric shock—particularly Michael Douglas, who was so smitten he began to pursue Zeta-Jones "like a heat-seeking missile," as he later admitted.

The night they met, Douglas announced: "I want to father your children." ("The balls of someone who could sit there and say that!" she marvels, still astonished despite his success.) On their second date he showed her how he could touch his nose with his tongue. But despite such talents, he led him on a merry chase as she headed off to co-star with Sean Connery in *Entrapment,* jetting to such far-flung locations as Kuala Lumpur and even a remote Scottish island, where Douglas, who is a quarter of a century older than Zeta-Jones, found a florist to deliver her dozens of roses. It took him nine months of courting, but he finally lured her to his Moorish cliff-top villa on Majorca for a holiday, during which their affair was publicly announced by the paparazzi photos of a topless Zeta-Jones nuzzling with her new swain aboard a yacht.

Whereupon she promptly joined the ranks of Hollywood royalty, dining at the White House, accompanying Douglas (an official U.N. ambassador of peace) to the United Nations, presenting an Academy Award in a Versace dress, and hobnobbing with the A-list all over the globe. Not bad for the daughter of a working-class bloke who started his career as a confectioner by peddling sweets from shop to shop in little Welsh villages.

And last August, Zeta-Jones gave birth to Dylan Michael Douglas, who inherited his mother's silky black hair and—smack in the middle of his chin, an eloquent testimonial to the awesome power of genes—the famed Douglas dimple, a junior version of Grandpa Kirk's legendary cleft. By the time he was two months old, Dylan was nearly as well traveled as his peripatetic parents, having already hopscotched from Malibu to Aspen to New York to Bermuda to England, Scotland, and Wales.

On September 25, their shared birthday, Zeta-Jones turned 31 and Douglas turned 56. By October, Zeta-Jones, who also launched her own production company during the past year, had turned her attention to planning a nuptial extravaganza and being fitted for her Christian Lacroix wedding dress, an ivory satin gown shimmering with tiny glass beads. The wedding party, which was held at the Plaza Hotel in mid-November and was reported to cost up to $2 million, had a guest list of 360 that ranged from Jack Nicholson to Kofi Annan, with Barbara Walters, Danny DeVito, Art Garfunkel, Sir Anthony Hopkins, Goldie Hawn, and Martha Stewart among a stellar crowd attesting to the durable career of the groom. The rare crown prince who was born into a Hollywood dynasty but managed to make his own fortune and win his own acclaim, Douglas has earned two Academy Awards, one for best actor (for *Wall Street*) and one for best picture (for producing *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*). With assets estimated in the hundreds of millions of dollars, Douglas is quite a catch by any measure, even if he is older than either of the bride's parents.

As if all this weren't enough excitement for the moment, December brings the premiere of Zeta-Jones's latest film, *Traffic,* Steven Soderbergh's dark, byzantine thriller about international drug trafficking that stars—who else—Michael Douglas as America's newly appointed drug czar, and Zeta-Jones (who filmed her part when she was six months pregnant) as the calculating wife of a major drug lord.

All in all, few fairy tales could compete with Zeta-Jones's actual life story. At the moment she can command $7 million for a picture. Her present reality exceeds most people's wildest fantasies. What on earth is left to wish for?

Curled up on one of the voluminous sofas in her newly acquired living room, right next to a silver-framed photograph of herself, in plunging crimson décolletage, shaking hands with President Clinton, Zeta-Jones grins, her catlike amber eyes turning up at the corners. "I want to have my Oscar up there, too," she says mischievously, waving a diamond-bedecked hand at her true love's gleaming golden statuettes, which are perched on a bookshelf. "He tells me not to worry; if I don't get one, I can borrow his."

She rolls her eyes; clearly a hand-me-down Oscar is not going to satisfy La Zeta-Jones (who added the Zeta—her Irish grandmother's name, taken from a ship that once passed through local waters—when she began her professional career and found there was already a Catherine Jones). "I want Michael to be proud of me," she adds with a firmness that suggests she will leave nothing to chance.

"She has always had this drive," says her younger brother, Lyndon Jones, the director of development for his sister's new production company, Milkwood Films. "It was like a burning ambition. When Catherine went onstage, it was like a tiger coming out in her. That was her territory; don't invade it! It's the fire within, and Catherine has always had that."

Even the baby has failed to diminish her hungry single-mindedness. Miraculously, although she ballooned to more than 180 pounds during her pregnancy, Zeta-Jones is already looking quite sleek, her lithe dancer's body once again in fighting trim. "I've still got a way to go," she says, appraising herself with a critical eye. "I ate for Wales when I was pregnant, and I enjoyed everything. I was like, 'Oh, who gives a shit—I'll have another burger!'"

She grins ruefully. "Cut to 'Oh my God, my baby's out and nothing has changed! I'm still the same shape!' I'm a complete peasant. Hot bread with lots of butter and cheese—that's what I'd eat for the rest of my life, but I can't eat it. Lots of women look at me and think, You bitch—it's all come off you! But I've been working at it."

Today she is CONTINUED ON PAGE 130



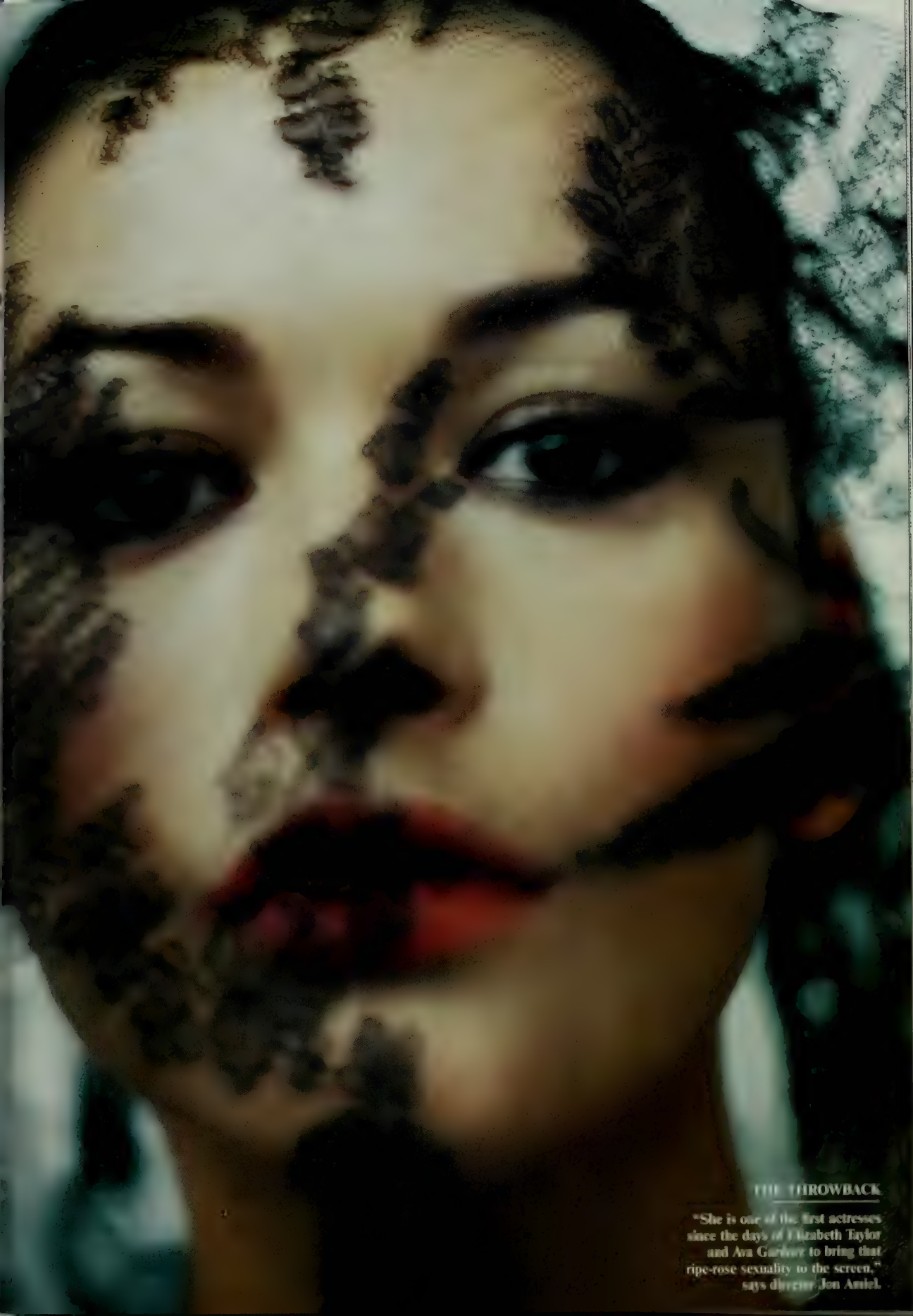
"There is a kind of danger to a woman like Catherine.... She is definitely not an innocent

OVER MILK WOOD

Zeta-Jones, Wales's most famous export since Dylan Thomas, sang and tap-danced her way through a small-town childhood on the way to stardom.




"Lots of
women look
at me and think,
You bitch—it's
come off you!
But I've been
working at it.



THE THROWBACK

"She is one of the first actresses since the days of Elizabeth Taylor and Ava Gardner to bring that ripe-rose sexuality to the screen," says director Jon Amiel.

Often posing as the scion of a famous family, Christopher Rocancourt—alias Rockefeller (or De Laurentiis or de la Renta)—swindled millions from marks around the world: there was the diamond-smuggling scheme in Zaire, the alleged perfume fraud involving Jermaine Jackson, the fleecing of a Beverly Hills boutique owner. Yet somehow he kept slipping through the arms of the law. BRYAN BURROUGH tracks a master of audacity from Los Angeles, where Rocancourt left a mysterious corpse in his wake, to the Hamptons, where he ran afoul of a genuine heir, to France, where his poignant masquerade began



The Counterfeit



THE WILD BUNCH

From left, Christopher Rocancourt's bodyguard, actor Mickey Rourke, wine salesman Charles Glenn, Rocancourt, and his girlfriend, Rhonda Rydell, March 1997. *Inset,* Rocancourt's East Hampton mug shot from August.

Rockefeller



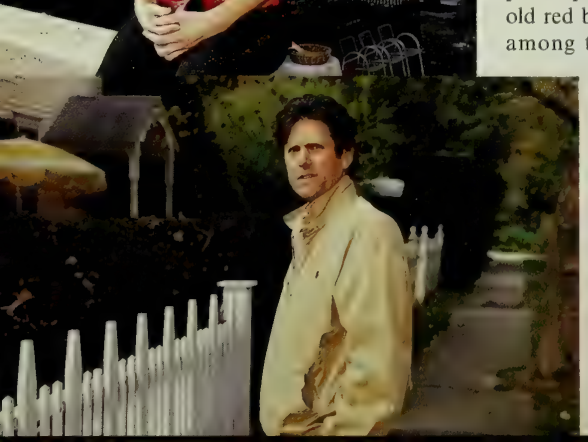




TO CATCH A THIEF

From top: **painter Gines Serran-Pagan at his Southampton studio; Rocancourt at the July 29 dinner given by Pagan; the Mill-Garth Country Inn, Amagansett; masseuse Corine Eeltink; Kevin McCrary, outside the Mill-Garth.**





From Nancy Drew to Miss Marple to *Murder, She Wrote,* amateur crime solving among the bourgeoisie has been as popular in literature and film as it has been unusual in the real world. In Hitchcock's *Rear Window* and Woody Allen's *Manhattan Murder Mystery,* to cite but two examples, upscale Manhattanites band together to snoop out murderers. Great story lines, you've probably observed at some point, but it would never happen in real life, especially not in New York. Hard-core New Yorkers, everyone knows, are too busy, too street-smart, to stick their noses into a real criminal's business.

Unless . . . unless there's money at stake. Unless they've been conned. Unless the police don't seem to care. Or unless they have time on their hands, say, on a dark, drowsy summer evening in the Hamptons. Then, well, then anything could happen.

A few blocks up Main Street from the elegant strolling alleys of downtown Southampton, a gravel lane leads to a secluded artist's compound. Inside, next to a paint-splattered studio and a 300-year-old red barn, chickens and goats wander among the parked Jaguars and Mercedes. This is the domain of the Spanish-born painter Gines (pronounced "Hee-*nez*") Serran-Pagan. A rakish 51-year-old with flowing black hair and a pirate's black beard, Pagan is a playful caricature of every artist who ever dreamed of repairing to the Hamptons. He is the kind of world-weary Euro-philosopher who, in his lilting Andalusian accent, says things like "I am an artist. I get bored with normal peopl

On Saturday evening, July 29, Pag was holding a dinner party he was cert would bore no one. The first four gue arrived at seven: Pierre, a mysterious collector; Maria and Clea, daughters o filthy-rich Greek shipping magnate; a Natsuko, the daughter of a top executive Sony International in Tokyo. Not until most nine, after Pagan had placed a w ried call, did the guest of honor appe Christopher Rockefeller, the handson French-raised heir to the Rockefeller f tune. Stepping out of a gold Mazda 6 Rockefeller was blond and thickly muscl in his early 30s, with a prominent nose a a thick Gallic accent. Hovering at his s were his aide, Joseph, a balding 50-ish m with a cell phone pressed to one ear, a Laurent, Rockefeller's buxom French la friend. "You should really paint Lauren Rockefeller told Pagan. "In the nude."

Although Rockefeller had been f quenting Pagan's studio now for a we the artist insisted on showing him the ba and his bleating menagerie of farm a mals. Pagan was mired in a legal fig with the village of Southampton over th presence on his property, and Rockefel had promised to get New York govern George Pataki to intervene. They stro into Pagan's cavernous wood-floored livi room, where, amid a tableau of Afric idols and his own brightly hued works, t host introduced Rockefeller to the oth guests. Rockefeller had told Pagan he w in the process of buying a $34 milli yacht, and the artist lingered as Rockefel chatted with the shipping heiresses. "The girls, they can help you [with] your n boat," Pagan offered enthusiastically. Eve tually they all took seats at the dinn table, where at one end Pagan had plac an easel holding a smoky oil painti called *Sunset in Quilin* that he sa Rockefeller had pledged to buy.

At first glance it was just anoth Hamptons dinner party in high summ with a simple soup, salad, and pasta serv by Pagan's assistant. But almost nothi about the evening was what it seeme Pierre, the art collector, was actually l ter Fazio, a local contractor whose s played with Pagan's son. Maria was ac ally the New York bureau chief at *Peo* magazine, Maria Eftimiades. Her frie Clea was a lawyer for the U.S. Navy. N suko Utsumi was a photojournalist wo ing on a book about African genit mutilation. They were all part of an elab rate parlor game Pagan had construct to study the impostor who called hims Christopher Rockefeller, a man who l gan had concluded was without a dou

most fascinating con artist he had
r met.
lis suspicions had arisen the first after-
on Rockefeller had dropped by the
dery, escorted by a mutual friend, a
tch-born masseuse named Corine Eel-
t. Rockefeller had swept through the
ery with confidence, pointing to a half-
:en paintings he said he intended to
. He boasted of the Pink Period Picas-
in his living room, and of the Pissarro
ide it. Offhandedly, he mentioned three
arate dinners he had attended with
:sident Clinton. Needless to say, he
de a powerful impression. When Eeltink
for a massage appoint-
nt, Pagan asked Rocke-
er to stay for dinner.
They ate in the garden,
ompanied by Pagan's baby-
:er, his assistant, and a
ıseguest from Hong Kong.
went swimmingly until Pa-
ı checked his pantry for red
ıe. He was out. All he had
s a cheap bottle of jug wine
normally used to make san-
a. Hoping no one would no-
e, he emptied it into a ceramic
; and poured a glass for Rocke-
er. To his surprise, Rockefeller
ıpsodized over it. "Wonderful,"
said. "A Bordeaux, no?"
"Uh, no," Pagan said. "California."

> "I called the F.B.I. almost as a joke.... Within five minutes they were at my house."

By the end of that first evening, after listening to Rockefeller hold forth on the best hotels in Hong Kong, the future of the Chinese economy, and his dislike of Kant, Pagan was nvinced his new friend was a fraud—a able, well-read, well-traveled fraud. For the names he dropped, Rockefeller had, Pagan put it, "the whiff of the street out him." His car was the final giveaway; gan doubted a Rockefeller would drive Mazda. Still, in the ensuing days Rocke-ler dropped by often, discussing with gan his love for Nietzsche and Picasso d the game of tennis. "He's a fake, but iked the guy," Pagan explains today. "I e the unusual."

And so Pagan, like a scientist studying new life-form, arranged the fake dinner rty to examine his new fake friend. e had no way of knowing how danger-ıs a game he was playing. Had the tist known the truth about "Christo-ıer Rockefeller," he might not have been eager to hatch his little scheme. Pagan ew nothing of the string of victims the n man had allegedly bilked in Rome, ong Kong, Bangkok, Paris, and Los Angeles. He knew nothing about the shooting in West Hollywood, nothing of the strange death in California—and nothing whatsoever about the hand grenades in the space heater. "I just wanted to have a little fun," Pagan says with a shrug.

Once the dinner began, they were barely into the soup course before Eftimiades, the shipping heiress/*People* reporter, began peppering Rockefeller with questions.

"So, Chris, where do you live?" she asked, according to Pagan.

"On Further Lane, in East Hampton," Rockefeller replied, mentioning the Hamptons' toniest address.

"How would you describe your house?" Eftimiades pressed.

Rockefeller thought a moment. "Pretentious," he said.

When Eftimiades pressed further, asking what he meant by pretentious, Rockefeller grew curt. "You know, big," he said. Pagan, sensing Rockefeller's irritation, and not wanting him to grow suspicious of the charade, kicked Eftimiades under the table.

The conversation lapsed into long soliloquies, with Rockefeller expounding on the nature of women, the incredible returns he earned in the stock market, and the art world; he pronounced Pagan's paintings "passionate and free." But then, midway through the soup course, the dinner came to an abrupt halt. Suddenly Clea, using a disposable camera borrowed from Pagan's baby-sitter, snapped a picture of Rockefeller, soupspoon poised beneath his chin.

Immediately Joseph, the aide-de-camp, leapt to his feet. "No! No! No pictures!" he barked. "Gines, tell them, no pictures."

"Clea," Pagan said after a moment, "please, no pictures." To Joseph, Pagan whispered, "Forgive them, they're tourists from Greece. They just want a picture of a Rockefeller." But Joseph was insistent. He produced an envelope he showed to Pagan. Inside were stuffed $100 bills, as much as $10,000 by the artist's estimate. "I'll buy the film," Joseph said.

"Forget about it," Pagan said soothingly. "Just sit down and enjoy your dinner."

The tempest passed. For the rest of the evening, as conversation and red wine flowed freely, the closest anyone came to unmasking the charade was a moment when Pagan, a twinkle in his eye, pronounced Rockefeller a "genius."

"Why?" Rockefeller asked.

"You are a genius. You just are."

"Well, Gines," Rockefeller replied, as Pagan recalled, "Einstein was a genius, and he lived with very few clothes and very few shoes. What do you think a genius is?"

Pagan leaned in close. "A genius is a person who has control, who has no fear," he said. For the briefest moment their eyes met, and Pagan sensed that some part of Rockefeller's elaborate mask had fallen away. "Then he knew," the artist speculates today. "He knew that I knew, and he knew I would keep his secret, that I wouldn't turn him in."

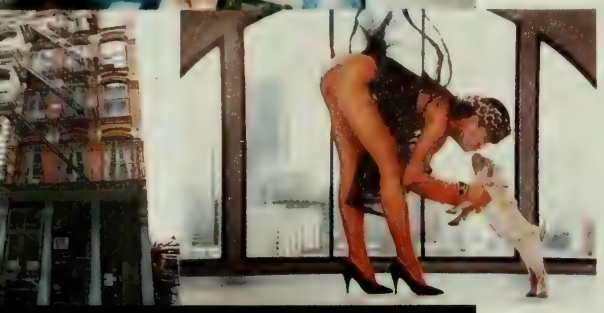
Around midnight Rockefeller and his entourage departed. "When he left," Pagan remembers, "we laughed like crazy." The next day Rockefeller telephoned to express his thanks for a wonderful evening. Then he asked Pagan for the number of his overseas bank account, so that he could wire him several hundred thousand dollars for a half-dozen of Pagan's paintings.

It was a moment Pagan had been expecting. "If you don't mind, Chris, cash is better for me," he purred. "You're a Rockefeller. You don't have any problem with cash, do you?"

"Oh, no," the con man replied. "No. Of course not."

Three nights after Pagan's dinner party, just past midnight on August 2, a blue Volkswagen Cabrio coasted to a stop at a Mobil station on Highway 27, the two-lane blacktop that bisects Amagansett, the leafy beach town alongside East Hampton. A fine drizzle was falling as the driver, Kevin McCrary, a lean, boyish 52-year-old wearing khaki shorts and a T-shirt, stepped out into the parking lot and began craning his head around, peering into the inky night. Mc-





ORPHAN IN THE STORM

From top: Christopher Rocancourt with his wife, Pia Reyes, mid-90s; the TriBeCa loft where Rocancourt and Reyes lived with their son, Zeus; Reyes, a November 1988 *Playboy* Playmate; the Saint-Germain-Village orphanage where Rocancourt lived; Rocancourt, aged nine; George Mueller, supervising investigator for the Los Angeles district attorney, October 27, 2000.







Crary is the son of the renowned John Reagan "Tex" McCrary, a Republican Party fixture who had parlayed a postwar career in broadcasting and public relations into friendships with presidents from Eisenhower to Reagan. Kevin, whose godfather was financier Bernard Baruch, and who grew up on a first-name basis with such people as Jock Whitney, was, like Pagan, a Hamptons archetype, a footloose heir who spoke vaguely of his work in "investigative journalism" and Internet investments. He talked about spending time in the Amazon and St. Barts.

That night, standing in the rain at the Mobil station, McCrary was searching for Christopher Rockefeller. All evening he had talked with police in nearby Hampton Bays, explaining to two detectives how Rockefeller had taken $14,000 from his friend the masseuse Corine Eeltink, promising to triple her money. McCrary, who knew nothing of Pagan's dinner, told the detectives he had been suspicious of Rockefeller from the outset; he didn't think a Rockefeller should have a French accent, much less a Mazda. McCrary's suspicions had hardened into anger when Rockefeller refused to return Eeltink's money. When Eeltink abruptly returned to Holland to care for her ailing father, McCrary took her case to the police. The detectives, however, weren't sure what laws had been broken, and McCrary had left the meeting frustrated, not at all convinced the detectives would pursue the case.

So, McCrary figured, he would; maybe he could come up with evidence that would spur them to action. His first step, McCrary decided, was to locate his prey. Though Rockefeller haunted some of the Hamptons' hottest nightclubs, no one had seen him in days, nor did anyone know precisely where he lived; despite references to a mansion on Further Lane, McCrary felt certain that couldn't be true. While sitting with police, he remembered that Rockefeller's friend Laurent had once taken a taxi home from the house where McCrary and a group of friends were staying in Water Mill. McCrary telephoned the taxi company, and to his surprise a dispatcher dug up the information that the friend had been dropped off at the Mobil station in Amagansett.

Which was why McCrary now found himself studying the shadowed storefronts up and down Highway 27. Somewhere nearby, he suspected, Rockefeller and his entourage were holed up, probably sipping champagne he had bought with Corine Eeltink's hard-earned $14,000. McCrary walked down the road into town a bit, unsure what he was looking for. He spotted a policeman outside the Stephen Talkhouse, a local bar. "I'm looking for a guy," McCrary told the cop. "Probably staying at a hotel or a B&B around here."

"Check down there," the cop said, motioning toward a darkened street called Windmill Lane. "I think there's something down there."

The rain was picking up as McCrary walked down Windmill Lane. When he reached a wooden windmill on the left side, he stopped. Ahead he spied a sign for the Mill-Garth Country Inn, a cream-colored bed-and-breakfast. Sensing he was onto something, McCrary walked by the inn and flattened himself against a high hedge that fronted its small gravel parking area. Slowly he crept forward.

And then, while pondering his next move, he heard a sound. A voice. Someone was talking on a cell phone on the other side of the hedge, in the hotel parking lot. McCrary froze, straining to make out the conversation. After a minute he recognized the voice. It seemed to be Joseph, Rockefeller's rough-hewn aide-de-camp. "Call me Joey D," Joseph had told McCrary when they first met.

After a minute Joseph stopped talking. Not wanting to be seen, McCrary returned to his car. Sliding behind the wheel, he drove back to the Mill-Garth and, taking a deep breath, eased his car boldly into the parking lot. When his headlights shone on a man standing in front of him—he was almost certain it was Joseph—McCrary hit the brakes, backed into the street, and returned to the Mobil station.

His heart pumping, McCrary picked up a tape recorder he had brought along—he wasn't sure why—and began trotting back toward the inn. Suddenly, halfway there, he saw a group of people walk out of the Mill-Garth's driveway and stop beneath a streetlight a hundred yards in front of him. It looked like Rockefeller. With him were Joseph and someone McCrary didn't recognize. He ducked into the bushes.

He stayed there, CONTINUED ON PAGE

"He said he had robbed a bank, that he had done bad things.... His heart was so hard, he was so hurt."



PASSPORT TO PARADISE

Actress-model Rhonda Rydell with Rocancourt, 1998. Mickey Rourke called the couple "Bugsy and Virginia" after Bugsy Siegel and Virginia Hill. *Insets*, two of Rocancourt's passports.

The Great Survivor

Bill Clinton may be the most dazzling political talent of his era, even if his only consistent policy was survival. His greatest gift, argues DAVID HALBERSTAM, was a profound understanding of the American people, and his ultimate advantage was their understanding of him—that, for all Clinton's weaknesses, he was better than his enemies

William Jefferson Clinton was more than just a brilliant survivor, a politician who won two terms against great odds, fought off an impeachment conviction, and ended an eight-year presidency with his popularity at virtually an all-time high. He was a *survivalist,* a word I did not know existed, but discovered only when I looked it up in *The O.E.D.*, in an attempt to find a description worthy of his performance. According to the dictionary, a survivalist is someone who "makes a policy of aiming to survive."

Mere survivors manage to slip by, with a little shrewdness and a little good luck. With Clinton, survival was never a matter of luck—it was *always* by design. Indeed, it was the purpose (sometimes it seemed the sole purpose) of his career. With Clinton—starting out poor in a rich man's game, coming from the weakest of states to catapult himself into national politics—survival became a way of life.

No one could match his political radar. He could sense moods and trends even before they crystallized and began to show up in the polls. Self-evidently the most gifted politician of the modern era, Clinton was the first post–Cold War president, and also became the first Democrat to gain a second term since Franklin Roosevelt, 60 years earlier. He did this in the face of powerful historical forces that



FF THE CUFF

esident Clinton, mid-1990s.
o one ever did empathy,
l empathy and artificial empathy,
tter. . . . He seemed to have
rfect pitch for the mood of the
untry," writes Halberstam.

"Sometimes Clinton seemed a man defined more by his enemies than by his friends."

systematically diminished the kind of traditional liberalism that was natural to him and his party the nation was becoming more conservative in a time of unparalleled affluence, and it appeared that the Republicans would dominate the political landscape for a generation, much as the Democrats had in the New Deal and post–New Deal eras.

His election in 1992 reflected an even greater generational change than the one in 1960, when John Kennedy became the first president born in the 20th century. Kennedy, after all, had been young enough to be the son of Dwight Eisenhower, the man he replaced, just as Clinton was young enough to be George H. W. Bush's son. But Kennedy and Eisenhower had shared at least one defining experience: the Second World War. By contrast, Bush and Clinton were defined by completely different experiences; Clinton was born a year after the first atomic weapons had been dropped to end the war in which Bush had served as a young bomber pilot. The war that Bush knew had united Americans; the war that Clinton knew best—Vietnam—had torn the country apart. The generational difference resulted in vastly different priorities. Bush, who had seen firsthand the damage caused by America's isolationism, cared most about foreign policy and national security; Clinton, growing up in the embers of the bitter division over race in the South, cared most about civil rights. On this more than any other issue, his genuine passion, rather than a facile empathy, showed.

The sea change in American politics caused by the collapse of the Soviet empire had opened the door to Clinton's presidency. Older, more experienced, and better-known Democrats, such as Mario Cuomo and Bill Bradley, had been wary of challenging Bush, the president who had presided over the end of the Cold War, the reunification of Germany, and the stunning four-day land war in the Gulf, and whose personal approval rating for a time was higher than 80 percent. Clinton entered the race almost as a lark; it was a good way to test the terrain, make a favorable impression on the media, and perhaps, as a bonus, get a vice-presidential nomination. Then, as the Democratic field displayed its weakness and as issues that in an earlier time might have worked against him—such as his resistance to the draft during Vietnam—declined in importance, his amazing natural political talent began to show itself.

Nothing so clearly reflected the end of the glacial era in American politics caused by the Cold War (and the failure of the older generation to understand the consequences of that change) as the moment in October 1992 when Bush, who had done so much to help end Cold War tensions, attacked Clinton for having gone to Moscow as a young Rhodes scholar.

Clinton's talents as a survivalist led to his skillful centering of both himself and his party; he had the almost unique ability to force his opponents, whether in his own party or the opposition, to the fringes. He *always* had a sense of the center, and from where the principal threats to him might come. Once, some years before he ran for the presidency, he told his friend Tom Kean, then the liberal Republican governor of New Jersey, that they both could win a presidential race because they were both so close to the center of the country, but that the shame of their careers was that neither of them could be nominated. Kean, he said, was too liberal for the Republicans, and he was too conservative for the Democrats.

He ran at a time when his party was uniquely vulnerable and badly fragmented. As economic and demographic power and influence were moving from the Northeast and the industrial Midwest to the Sunbelt, Clinton was elected with a minority of white-male American votes. His constituencies were—unlike the traditional Democratic blue-collar constituency that had lasted from Roosevelt to Johnson—comparatively frail and volatile, an odd amalgam of women, blacks, liberals, Latinos, gays, and some blue-collar workers. Clinton understood all too well his good fortune in the fundamentalist right's hold over the Republican nominating process: the way it tended to alienate middle-class women—the great new swing factor in American politics—and also to produce badly damaged Republican presidential candidates.

He was acutely aware of the powerful cultural forces aligned against him, having managed to win five gubernatorial elections in the post–1965 Voting Rights Act South; he knew cultural and ethnic issues had come more important than economic on To win in the South, a Democrat had to a skillful manipulator of symbols and h to concentrate on issues that were not plosive—education, industrial growth—wh avoiding the obvious hot-button cultu issues, such as the death penalty. One Clinton's lowest moments as a politici came during the 1992 New Hampshire p mary, when he returned to Little Rock preside over the execution of Rickey R Rector, a 40-year-old black man convict of killing a police officer. Rector's men faculties were so severely diminished th when he went off to the electric chair asked the prison guards to save the pec pie from his final meal so that he could it on his return. It was the kind of price survivalist has to pay.

For a variety of reasons, t opposition party loath Clinton. Many southern R publicans were bitter becau he came from the same regi and should, they believe have the same opinions (a prejudices) that they did. Even worse, spite his alleged representation of the De ocratic Party's more conservative wing, was married to a woman who was to the the embodiment of the Democratic le someone who was hardly shy about h opinions and went around flaunting h maiden name as if it were a badge of p sonal independence. Even worse than th he tended to co-opt their issues: crime, e ing welfare, and, for a time, family valu

If anything, the right's hatred of h often seemed self-destructive: inevitab Clinton was able to turn that hatred to advantage. Whatever else he may ha been, he was not mean-spirited, and it w his particular gift, and also his wife's, unsettle their many critics and opponen so much as to make *them* seem me spirited. In the end, it seemed as if were ever calm and they were ever angry

But if he was hated by the oppositio he was not always beloved by those in h own party—in no small part because was so articulate and politically seducti and therefore he tended to raise expec tions beyond what he was able to deliv Sometimes he seemed a man defined m by his enemies than CONTINUED ON PAGE



BILL OF FAIR

A 1993 Annie Leibovitz portrait of Bill Clinton in the Oval Office, taken the day before he was sworn in as president. "Whatever else Clinton may have been," Halberstam writes, "he was not mean-spirited. . . . In the end, it seemed as if the more cynical and his critics were ever angry."



WANTING TO EXHALE

When legendary TV executive Geraldine Laybourne started Oxygen, a new cable and on-line network for women, it seemed she was bringing every asset to the table: the creative halo she'd earned at Nickelodeon, a partnership with Oprah Winfrey, and $300 million from backers. But, DAVID MARGOLICK reports, critics have panned such giggly Oxygen fare as *Pajama Party*, and cable operators may turn Laybourne's programming revolution into "Can't-See TV"



DREAM TEAM

Founders Caryn Mandabach, Oprah Winfrey, Geraldine Laybourne, and Marcy Carsey at Oxygen's Manhattan offices for the network's launch party, February 2, 2000.

Geraldine Laybourne is surely the most successful ex-schoolteacher in the world. She turned Nickelodeon into one of the most valuable properties in television. Disney chairman Michael Eisner personally lobbied her to join his company. Twice, in 1998 and 1999, *Fortune* crowned her the 20th-most-powerful woman in American business. Solely on her reputation and the sheer force of her personality, she defied the naysayers and, two years ago, raised $300 million to start a new women's cable television and on-line network, in part by recruiting two of television's *other* most powerful women, Oprah Winfrey and television producer Marcy Carsey, to join her. And earlier this year, in February, she actually got that network—which she christened Oxygen—on the air.

But, for all Gerry Laybourne has accomplished in her 53 years, there remains one thing that even she still can't do. She can't get Oxygen in her own home, an apartment on Central Park West in Manhattan. Nor can most of her 700 employees, who live in and around New York City. Nor can most of America's media elite. Nor, for that matter, can 9 of 10 Americans with television sets, and 6 of the 7 who have cable. Among those who still cannot watch Oxygen are many people who believe Laybourne is a gutsy visionary who has dedicated her entire career to making television better. And many others who think she's a self-righteous self-promoter who has spent years cultivating a fawning press and then believing everything it has written about her. And some who predict that Oxygen will one day become a powerhouse. And still many others who consider it doomed, a victim of colossal hubris and chutzpah.

Suppose they put on a new network and nobody came? Or watched? More than two years after it was first bruited about as the antidote to traditional women's television, more than a year



ABC's then president, Robert Iger, came to write Laybourne off as a "loon" and a "pain in the ass," according to two other executives.

after its much-heralded Web sites first went on-line, and nearly a year after its first telecast, Oxygen remains the stealth network, not only off most television screens but off most radar screens as well. Have you ever seen it? Have any of your friends? Though they claim it is now in roughly 12 million homes, these are largely in the "fly-over" states—those barren hills and desolate plains in Saul Steinberg's famously distorted *New Yorker* map of the United States, all of those states that went G.O.P. red on the electoral-college map. Oxygen's predicament is neatly encapsulated in the name of the venerable old game show it has resurrected: *I've Got a Secret.* To listen to industry insiders, its financial predicament could be called *Beat the Clock.* And whether it can surmount the enormous financial and programmatic hurdles before it is *The $64,000 Question.* Or, rather, the $450 million one.

Oxygen may be floating all around us, but getting Laybourne's version of it on the air at a time when cable systems are saturated and shelf space scarce is, by any measure, astonishing. So are its offices, on four floors of a converted Nabisco factory in the Chelsea section of Manhattan. But keeping it all going—devising must-see television in a marketplace that still hasn't shown that it wants it, then finding enough advertisers and investors to bankroll it—may prove the neatest trick of all. Laybourne, who built Nickelodeon, the cable network for children, in the 1980s, when expectations were low and no one was watching, is now in the center of the big top, and on the highest high-wire act of her career. Always, she has assumed that no death-defying stunt was beyond her. But to many in the tent, friends and foes alike, she's wobbling.

"My whole entire career, people have told me, 'It's impossible,'" she says. "They told me Nickelodeon was impossible, they told me building Nick Studios was impossible, they told me building Nick Films was impossible—they told me everything was impossible. And you know what? I never paid attention to that. I paid attention to the drive that I have to do something great and to do something different and to make a difference in the world." How, I ask her, has she always managed to defy the odds? "I'm just an ornery cuss," she replies.

She sits, wearing her trademark black leather tailored jacket and green wire-rimmed glasses, in her modest office, in a space where Oreos and Lorna Doones were once made. To her, life in a renovated cookie plant is apt, and not because junk food is forever popping up in Oxygen, whether in advertisements or conversations or on the sets, where glazed doughnuts seem as common as bouquets, ever tempting diet-crazed hosts and guests. "It says to me that we're builders and makers and that we're going to grow stuff and we're out in the open and that what we do is for everybody to share," she says. "It's energizing to be in this space. It's a bakery. This is not an office building where we're shuffling papers. This is a factory."

Two years ago she spotted what she considered a hole in television programming every bit as gaping as the one she'd seen 20 years ago for children. To her, the women's offerings already out there—a smorgasbord of soap operas, sob stories, victimization, rapists, and diseases of the moment—catered to outdated, condescending notions of feminine wants and needs. So Laybourne, whose personal Decalogue—she calls it Mother's Little Management Manifesto—includes "Think Big" (her Sixth Commandment) and "Take Risks" (her Seventh), set out to create something

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANNA WALKER



BAKE-OFF

Oxygen's offices, located in an old Nabisco factory. "It's energizing to be in this space," Laybourne says. "It's a bakery. This is not an office building where we're shuffling papers."

ifferent. It would serve younger, hipper, busier, more assertive, nd more confident women—"women who are leaning into their ves, who are independent and eager to take charge." It would ature large chunks of original programming, not the tired reruns ith which other new cable ventures had gotten their starts. And, mploying the much-hyped concept of "convergence," which ieant availing itself of the new, interactive technology of the In-rnet, it would listen to its viewers and "co-create" with them. he called her new venture Oxygen, a name that came to her t her ski house in Telluride, Colorado, where the bed is on heels so she can sleep on the balcony, under the stars. She wakened one morning gasping for oxygen in the thin alpine air nd realized that, in our frenetic society, every woman needed to ke a deep breath.

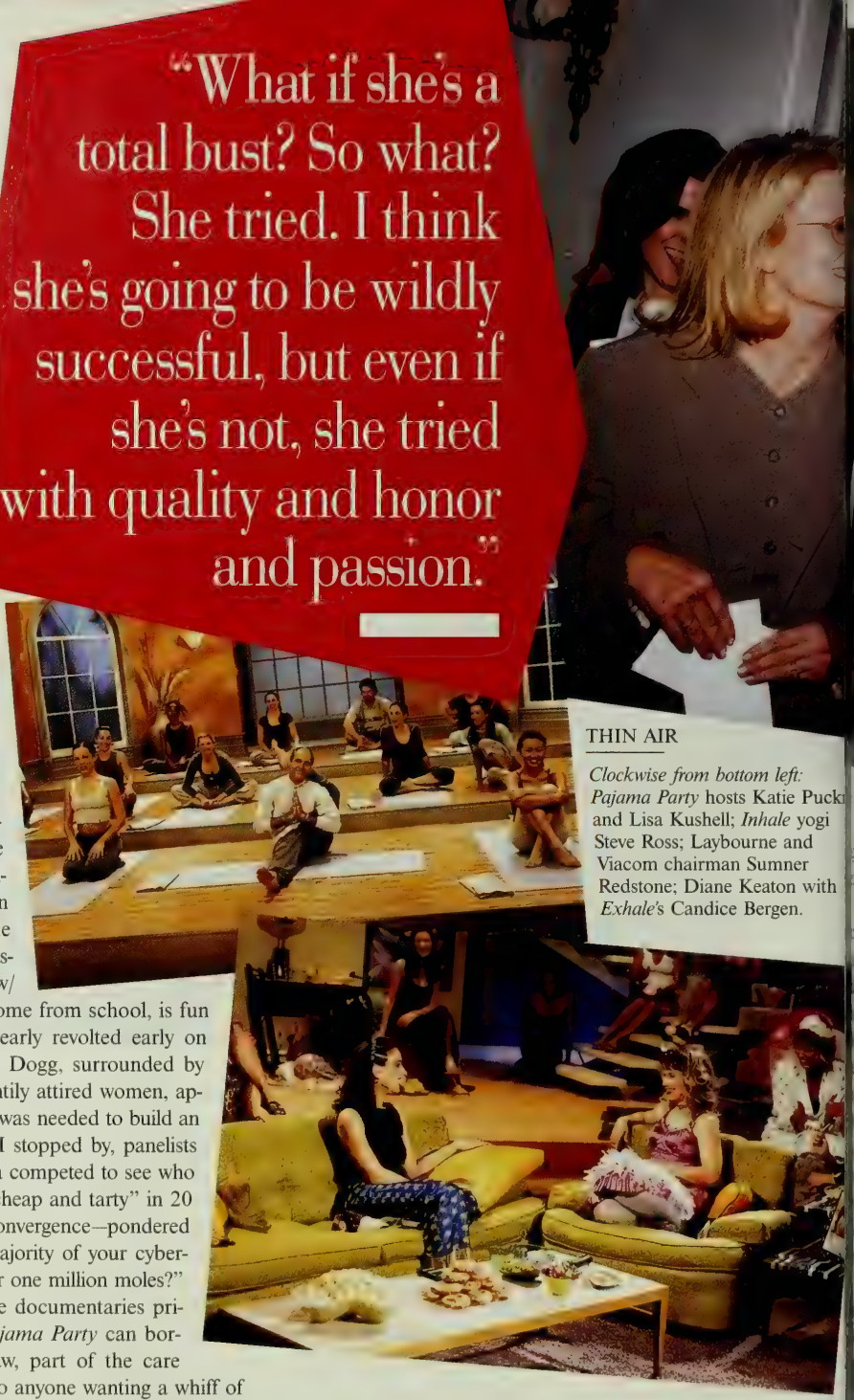
Legendarily persuasive and well connected, Laybourne sold her idea to the principals of Carsey-Werner-Mandabach, makers of mega-hits such as *The Cosby Show, Roseanne,* and *3rd Rock from the Sun,* who would put together Oxygen's programming. Then she and her new partners—Carsey, 56, Tom Werner, 50, and Caryn Mandabach, 50—flew to Chicago and sold the idea to Oprah Winfrey. I think some angels showed up today," Oprah wrote that ight in her journal. Then Laybourne sold it to such investors as Microsoft co-founder and billionaire Paul Allen and LVMH hairman Bernard Arnault, who together ponied up half of the $450 million she figured she'd need to run Oxygen for its first five years. Then she sold it to some cable operators. And then to the media, which bought it Big Time. *Forbes* put the triumvirate of Laybourne, Winfrey, and Carsey—a female DreamWorks—on its cover. Before beaming a single image, Oxygen was said to be worth more than $1 billion.

Then came the reality. With few or no analog slots available and digital television perpetually off somewhere in the future, crucial cable operators such as Time Warner (which has a stranglehold in New York City), Cablevision, and Comcast declined to pick up Oxygen. Their resistance stiffened because rather than paying for "carriage," as most new cable networks do, Laybourne was actually charging operators 19 cents a subscriber. Moreover, the operators felt that women were already well served. For one thing, they had Lifetime; while Laybourne may have considered it "mindless" and "a drug," as she told associates, it was wildly popular—in almost 78 million homes—and had improved since Oxygen began yapping at its heels. Women also had cable channels for romance and food and gardening, as well as the traditional broadcast networks, which have never been exactly indifferent to women viewers. In this instance, Laybourne's First and Fifth Commandments—"Know the Audience" and "Challenge Conventional Wisdom"—may actually conflict; women may already be getting what they

want. "If it ain't broke, fix it anyway" is one of Laybourne's favorite aphorisms, but it could also be her epitaph.

Had Oxygen's first crop of programs created buzz or demand, all doubts might have disappeared. But carving out a programming niche, like winning a slot on the cable box, is rough going; Oxygen finds itself faulted simultaneously for being too girlie-giggly and too angrily male-bashing, too highbrow (television for people who don't watch television), too lowbrow (unworthy of its revolutionary, uplifting mission), and too middlebrow (too much like everything else already out there).

> "What if she's a total bust? So what? She tried. I think she's going to be wildly successful, but even if she's not, she tried with quality and honor and passion."



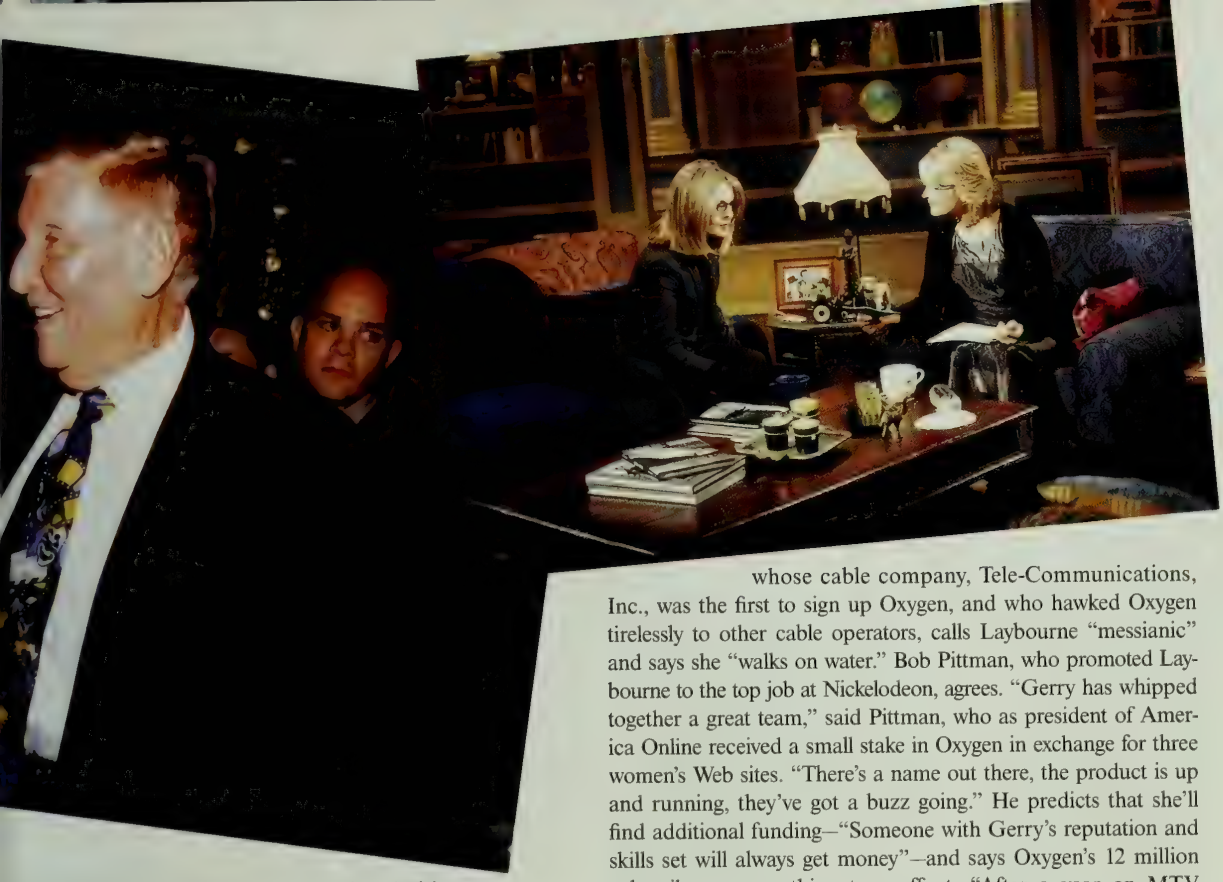
THIN AIR

Clockwise from bottom left: Pajama Party hosts Katie Puckri and Lisa Kushell; *Inhale* yogi Steve Ross; Laybourne and Viacom chairman Sumner Redstone; Diane Keaton with *Exhale*'s Candice Bergen.

An animation series, *X-Chromosome,* is hip, edgy, stimulating, original. Candice Bergen's talk show, which Oxygen may soon share with PBS, is charming and entertaining, but hardly trailblazing. (Question to Melissa Etheridge: "Of all the sperm in the world, why David Crosby's?") *Trackers,* a concert/talk show/confession-fest for teenage girls just home from school, is fun but not always elevating; staffers nearly revolted early on when the misogynist rapper Snoop Dogg, surrounded by pot smoke and an entourage of scantily attired women, appeared on the show. (Such "candy" was needed to build an audience, they were told.) The day I stopped by, panelists named Shannon, Adrianne, and Tara competed to see who could make herself look the most "cheap and tarty" in 20 seconds, and—in an odd nod to convergence—pondered the following question: "Would a majority of your cyberfriends rather have one million zits or one million moles?"

As She Sees It features impressive documentaries primarily by or about women. But *Pajama Party* can border on moronic. The episode I saw, part of the care package of cassettes Oxygen sends to anyone wanting a whiff of its programming, featured a segment called "Surgery Showcase," in which, as they sipped frothy, fruity drinks, hosts Katie Puckrik and Lisa Kushell compared the scars left behind from their spinal operation and nose job, respectively. Both inside and outside Oxygen, people fault Laybourne for yielding too much authority over programming to Carsey-Werner-Mandabach, and particularly to Mandabach, who has been the most involved of its three California principals. "Would Gerry Laybourne want to watch *a pajama party?*" one woman in television asked incredulously. They say that Oxygen reflects the cultural chasm between the coasts, with Mandabach's Hollywood vision—"a little bit more glitz, glamour, and yoga and baby-massage-type things," as one Oxygen alumna put it—prevailing over more East Coast, socially conscious, feminist fare. Laybourne insists that all partners are on the same page.

Carsey said even her grown daughter is reserving judgment on Oxygen; she still hasn't seen enough of it. The press has not been so reticent. In *The New York Times Magazine,* Francine Prose lumped Oxygen in with the very programming Laybourne had repudiated: "brainless, narcotizing amusement." In *Salon,* Joyce Millman called Oxygen "a depressing jumble of retro stereotypes and empty 'You go, girl!' solidarity" (and added that it was "absolutely obsessed with body image"). Jesse Oxfeld of *Brill's Content* chastised most of what he saw on Oxygen, but only after reconstruct-



g his Odysseus-style voyage in search of a television
, *any* television set, on which the channel was available.
"Branding" is everything these days, and the new network's
tchy name lent a pleasing leitmotif to its schedule. There are, for
stance, *Inhale* (its morning yoga program), *Pure Oxygen* (its
idday talk show), and *Exhale* (Bergen's evening talk show). But
e neat name cuts both ways. "Gasping for Oxygen," the *New*
rk Post declared above a story about Laybourne's efforts to
netrate New York. After the network closed two of its Web sites
d placed *Trackers* and *Pure Oxygen* on hiatus for the summer,
e Wall Street Journal said that Oxygen was "coming up for air."
nd when *Fortune* dropped Laybourne from its list of the 50
ost powerful women, in October, it said that Oxygen was "gasp-
g for viewers." It seems only a matter of time before someone
ks if Oxygen is suffocating. One former colleague of Lay-
urne's has gleefully taken to calling Oxygen "Carbon Dioxide."
The Schadenfreude might be surprising, given that Laybourne
s received years of adulatory press, often written by younger
omen who have portrayed her as both shrewd and Earth Moth-
ly. Detractors and admirers alike say that she is a kind of cult
gure, worshiped by female acolytes. But at both Nickelodeon
nd Disney, Laybourne left a considerable residue of resentment.
eople at both places speculate that her outsize ego led her to
ink she had spotted a hole in television that everyone else was
o blind or too primitive or too sexist or too timid to see. These
eople believe that Laybourne's clairvoyance is a bit of a myth—
She has yet to prove herself with an audience half of whom
on't believe in Santa Claus," one sneered—and that with Oxygen
e may finally get her comeuppance.
But Laybourne's fans think she will pull it all off. "Starting a
ew cable network is a tough game no matter who's doing it, but
would never count Gerry out," said Tom Freston of MTV, Lay-
ourne's boss during her days at Nickelodeon. Leo Hindery, whose cable company, Tele-Communications, Inc., was the first to sign up Oxygen, and who hawked Oxygen tirelessly to other cable operators, calls Laybourne "messianic" and says she "walks on water." Bob Pittman, who promoted Laybourne to the top job at Nickelodeon, agrees. "Gerry has whipped together a great team," said Pittman, who as president of America Online received a small stake in Oxygen in exchange for three women's Web sites. "There's a name out there, the product is up and running, they've got a buzz going." He predicts that she'll find additional funding—"Someone with Gerry's reputation and skills set will always get money"—and says Oxygen's 12 million subscribers are nothing to scoff at. "After a year on MTV [where Pittman was president] we had 500,000, so it sounds pretty good to me."

At least theoretically, Pittman could get Oxygen onto New York's television sets virtually overnight when the AOL–Time Warner merger goes through. But when asked about giving Laybourne a coveted slot on Time Warner Cable, Pittman suddenly grows more cagey. "I don't run the cable company," he says. Those who do—Joe Collins and Fred Dresler—aren't talking. But one Time Warner executive who did talk says that Oxygen has yet to earn its spurs. "We like Gerry, but at the end of the day, the law of business has not been suspended," he says. "You have to have a product and you have to price it right." In this respect, the Time Warner brass has been entirely consistent; a prominent cable executive recalls watching Caryn Mandabach approach Time Warner chairman Gerald Levin at a cable convention not long ago. "Let me talk to the most important person in the cable business and our future," she cooed. "Not me," he replied. "Talk to my people."

Manhattan's Chelsea Market is the only place in the world where the Oxygen gets thicker as one climbs higher. Walk through the ground floor, with its smells of fresh flowers and cookies and soups and breads, take the industrial-strength elevator to the seventh floor, and you trade a world starved for Oxygen for one suffused with it. On one monitor, Oprah's best friend, Gayle King, and Ellen DeGeneres's mother were discussing gay children. On another, the topic was children's cold medicines. On a third, some new Oxygen promotions were flashing by.

"Think like a mom," one declared. "Candy striper. Starlet. Friend. Think like a rocket scientist. Teacher. Single mom. Superstar.... Think like a goddess. Matron. Den CONTINUED ON PAGE 119

Spotlight

STEPPENWOLF'S TRIBAL WAVE



STAGE MIGHT
Ensemble members of Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre Company, photographed backstage at the Steppenwolf Theatre on Halsted Street: seated on floor (left to right), Joan Allen, Randall Arney, Gary Sinise; center row, Kevin Anderson, Glenne Headly, Alan Wilder, Martha Lavey, Kathryn Erbe, Jeff Perry, Moira Harris, Frank Galati; back row, Jim True-Frost, Tom Irwin, Terry Kinney, Tim Hopper, Eric Simonson.

When it was born in 1974, the Steppenwolf Theatre Company had "underdog" written all over it. Home base was a church basement in Highland Park, Illinois, rented for $10 a month. The founding trinity—Terry Kinney, Jeff Perry, and Gary Sinise—didn't have fancy degrees from famous theater departments. Instead they had, in the words of Sinise, "a huge chip on our shoulder." Soon enough they also had a company philosophy—an ensemble ethic that stressed raw emotional energy (i.e., tooth and claws). They'd grown into their literary namesake, the outsider that Hermann Hesse called "wolf of the Steppes." With



efining moments such as 1979's *Waiting for Lefty*, massively
warded productions such as 1980's *Balm in Gilead*, the under-
ogs entered the 80s as the cool kids of Chicago theater, the
ide of Chi-Town.

And then Steppenwolf took Manhattan: *True West* in 1982, *Balm in Gilead* in 1984, pulling out all the stops in 19[illegible] with *The Grapes of Wrath*—adding Obies and Tonys to its [illegible]. On the West Coast came movies and TV (and Oscar nominations and Emmys). Laurie Metcalf was Roseanne's sister; John Mahoney is Frasier's father; Gary Sinise, Truman and Wallace and

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANNIE LEIBOVITZ



Forrest Gump's friend Dan; Joan Allen, Pat Nixon in pearls; and, of course, John Malkovich, so insinuatingly atmospheric he plays himself in a movie that's sort of about . . . himself (*Being John Malkovich*). Even President Clinton got in on the awards action, presenting Steppenwolf with a 1998 National Medal of Arts.

Steppenwolf turns 25 this season, 2000–2001, having gotten through the dips and dysfunctions that beset all growing companies of artists, having shouldered debt and fund-raisers to build its state-of-the-art theater complex on Halsted Street. And then there are those tricky little questions, such as: How can you be a "Chicago



DRAMATIC FLAIR
More of the Steppenwolf gang: front row (left to right), Laurie Metcalf, Sally Murphy, Austin Pendleton, John Malkovich; center row, Amy Morton, Mariann Mayberry, Robert Breuler, Lois Smith, Martha Plimpton; back row, Tina Landau, Rondi Reed, Molly Regan, Francis Guinan, Rick Snyder, K. Todd Freeman, John Mahoney, Gary Cole.

sem[illegible] half your members live on the coasts? Well, the mem- answer, the company is a family—it holds together despite dis- ce. One of the newest members in this ensemble of 33, Mariann yberry, has a better take. She told *American Theatre* mag- ine, "It's a tribe." The Steppenwolves.

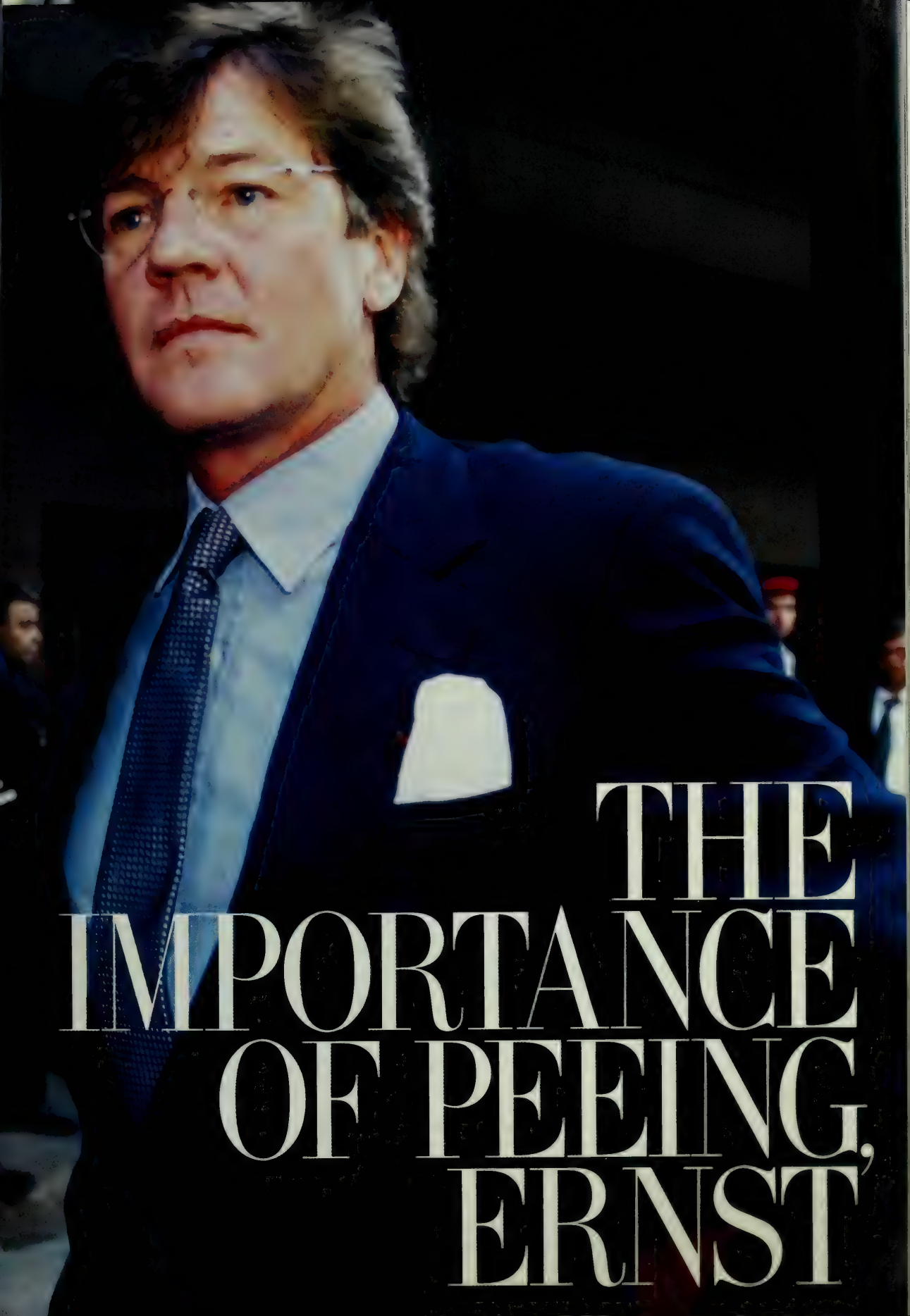
—LAURA JACOBS

For her third husband, Princess Caroline of Monaco chose a man with lineage even more exalted than her own: Ernst August, Prince of Hanover, Great Britain, and Ireland, whose title, castle, and $150 million net worth had won him an easy berth in London society. But Ernst's violent temper and public misbehavior—including a famed outdoor pee at Expo 2000—have led Buckingham Palace to declare him *persona non grata*. As aristocrats from Monaco to his native Germany worry that he'll spark an anti-royal backlash, JUDY BACHRACH wonders whether Ernst can come to terms with the downsides of princely privilege



NEWS LEAK

Princess Caroline of Monaco with her husband, Prince Ernst August of Hanover, at the opening of Expo 2000 in Hanover, Germany, June 2000. *Inset,* Prince Ernst urinating on the fence of the Expo's Turkish pavilion.



THE IMPORTANCE OF PEEING, ERNST



Josef Brunlehner says he had never talked to Ernst August, Prince of Hanover, Great Britain, and Ireland, before he was beaten up by those royal fists. He knew him by sight—who didn't? Ernst is, as a friend suggests, "one of the few European monarchs who have kept the lolly and the power and the land."

The athletic 46-year-old prince with the famously bad temper owns a $3 million villa on Lamu, a relatively unspoiled island off the coast of Kenya. This is where Brunlehner owns a discotheque, and, as his lawyer puts it, he is "one of the biggest German investors in Kenya."

The Prince of Hanover has more august connections. A direct descendant of both George III and the kaiser, he is a distant cousin of the Queen of England. These days, however, he is best known as the husband of the dashing Princess Caroline of Monaco, for whom he left his first wife, a blonde commoner with an excellent figure—and a wealthy Swiss father.

Ernst likes to holiday in this remote and enchanted East African spot with Princess Caroline and their various children. Brunlehner, 52, had seen him drinking at his bar, "but I avoided meeting him, because his behavior was known to me. He screams, he shouts."

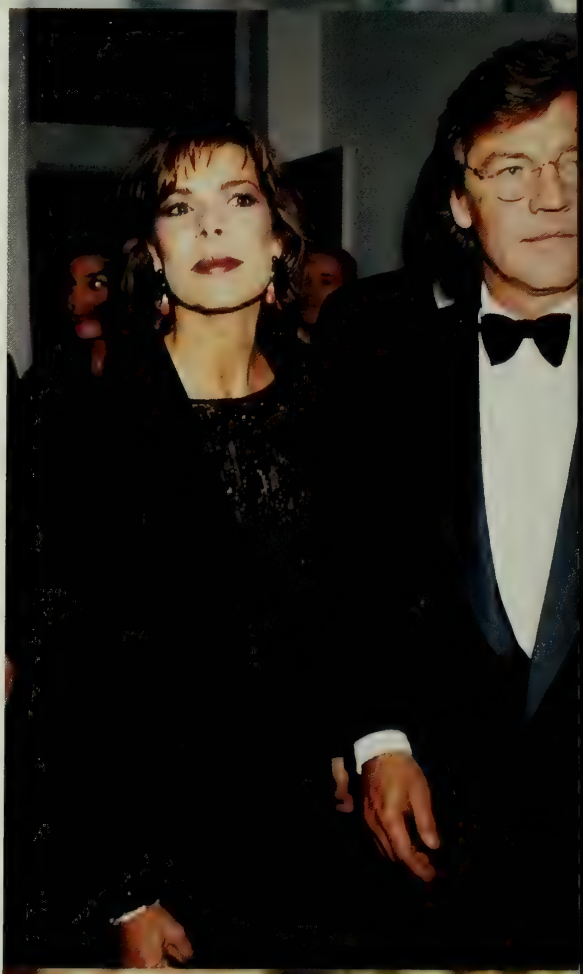
Like the prince, Brunlehner is not an inconspicuous figure locally.

"Everyone knows Big Joe," says Ekkehart Reinelt, Brunlehner's lawyer. "He's the John Wayne of Kenya." Indeed, Big Joe, as the Munich lawyer acknowledges, had acquired development rights to build villas close by Ernst's own property: "When he builds these villas, the residents will have a wonderful site from which to view Caroline. And the prince will have to open some roads for their use, which he used to use only for himself."

"I knew he was angry with me," concedes Big Joe. This did not augur well for his safety.

The prince, as several interested parties around the world have reason to know, guards his privacy more vigorously than most. Two years ago, returning with Caroline and a bodyguard to his Hanover estate from a charity party—one of their first big public events as a couple—he encountered Karsten Thürnau, a television cameraman, waiting patiently outside the prince's property line:

"Good evening," said the 28-year-old cameraman (the audio portion was captured for posterity). "I just want to take two, three pictures." Speechless with fury, Ernst stormed out of his car and began hitting his greeter for seven minutes with his umbrella. According to Thürnau, Princess Caroline looked on, wordless and motionless. "He broke my nose in two places, he hit me on my arms and legs—I said, 'Please,'" Thürnau recently recalled. "He called me '*Schwein*'—pig—many times."







"Grace was quite ambitious. She said, 'Ernst would be good for Caroline.'"

The prince tried in vain to summon a backup. "Hit him, bite him!" he ordered his chauffeur. After the event made headlines, a music-video producer in Hamburg brought out a rap song in its honor, including relevant parts of the soundtrack.

Nonetheless, Brunlehner in East Africa was quite unprepared for what happened this past January. Shortly before midnight he had an unexpected encounter with the head of the House of Hanover. "He ran on the beach with 12 to 15 African men—suddenly they were holding me. At that moment, he knocked me down. Three times. Then he kneeled on me, and still he punched me. Then the group pulled him away. He punched them too." The prince was yelling something odd, says Brunlehner, while he was attacking him: "*Du Zuhälter!*"—meaning "You pimp!" And also: "*Deutsches Schwein, deutsches Schwein.*"

"I was vomiting blood," recalls Brunlehner. "If they had not pulled him away from me I would be dead." Caroline, he observed, even at that painful point, "saw what was happening. When I left . . . she came running down to him." The victim was swiftly flown off to a hospital in Mombasa, where, says Reinelt, he was diagnosed with "a big hematoma that is pressing on his lungs." According to Reinelt, the Kenyan doctor who examined him said that some of the wounds must have been caused by a blunt object, perhaps a set of brass knuckles.

As for the prince, Caroline's husband: "He was not put under arrest," says the lawyer. First he reportedly flew off to Nairobi. Then "he took a plane to London the next evening. If he would have been arrested in Kenya, there would have been another punishment. Jail and strokes with a cane. Five to eight strokes with a cane." He laughs shortly. "*Schade, ja.*" A pity.

In the aftermath of the attack, the prince seemed fairly lighthearted about it. "I had the great pleasure of giving the man a left and a right," said Ernst to the press. The disco owner was a nuisance, after all, he explained: "Every night there was music until five in the morning. And every night between Christmas and New Year he trained a laser beam on my house." (Later, Ernst would admit in full-page ads to a "minor confronta-

NCELY
RSUITS

kwise from above:
st and his father-
w, Prince Rainier,
xpo 2000; Caroline
Ernst last January;
st with his father
Iarienburg castle,
4; a paparazzo
of Ernst changing
his bathing
1999; Caroline
Ernst in London,
8; and relaxing
vignon, 1997.





tion," but said that Brunlehner "was not injured as reported.")

But why shouldn't Ernst do as he wishes? After he had experienced his "great pleasure," a German court in Hanover fined the Thrasher Prince, as he is now known across the Continent, about $500,000—an amount Ernst is actually appealing.

"No, he will not get jail. *Ja,* because in Germany for a thing like this, you don't go to jail," explains Reinelt.

Nor was this the end of Prince Ernst's forays into the danger zone of recklessness. This past summer, in the midst of Expo 2000, Hanover's long-planned world's fair and its biggest attempt ever at attracting tourists and international renown (an attempt which, on first count anyway, fell grievously short of expectations), its leading citizen was snapped in an awkward posture, relieving himself on the orange fence of the beautiful, tile-studded Turkish pavilion. Ernst couldn't have selected a worse site. Many of Germany's two million Turks feel themselves to be a beleaguered minority. "What an affront," declared Zeynel Yesilay, private secretary to Turkish prime minister Bulent Ecevit. "Every five-year-old knows you cannot do this," said Yasar Bilgin, president of the Turkish Council in Germany. Ernst's amazing display was captured for all time on-camera. This became evident when a photo of it was speedily published in the *Bild Zeitung,* a deeply impertinent populist newspaper with no love for the Hanovers, a circulation of 4.5 million, and a fondness for imaginative compound nouns executed in bold type: PIPI-PRÜGEL-PRINZ (Peepee-Thrasher-Prince) and PINKEL-ATTACKE, for example.

Ernst phoned Anne-Kathrin Berger, the tall, attractive head of the newspaper's Hanover office—seven times. He had known her for 25 years; they had been distant friends. In a rage, the prince launched a vulgar critique of Berger's figure and then offered some advice: "Keep your ass together. You'll get fucked from the side.... Listen, we'll put it to the test tomorrow, then we'll see what happens. You will get one in your cunt."

"Do you talk to all people this way, Your Royal Highness?" asked the stunned editor.

"No. Only with assholes like journalists."

Berger eventually managed to rally: "Aren't you ashamed to use that kind of filthy language in front of your wife?"

"My wife," said the prince, with evident satisfaction, "would use even filthier language."

Thürnau, the battered cameraman, tries to explain the prince to me in class-conscious terms. He notes, for instance, that his royal assailant paid a mere $52,500 for breaking his nose. "No, it wasn't enough. But the highest people in society don't live like other people. None of them lives in shame in Germany."

But the lowing of the herd is really the least of Ernst's concerns. The prince has become the laughingstock of Europe and an object of exasperation even among some of his own friends. "He isn't even being considered for inclusion at Buckingham Palace garden parties, he is completely *persona non grata,*" c plains Harold Brooks-Baker, the publishing director of *Burk Peerage.* "They did feel and do feel that his relationship [wi Caroline] would hurt Princess Caroline and the Grimaldi family

Equally sobering: he has imperiled the delightful existence the German aristocracy. "For aristocracies to survive in popul culture you have to play up noblesse oblige—and play down ol fashioned autocracy and authoritarianism and erratic behavio says Robert Lacey, a biographer of Princess Grace.

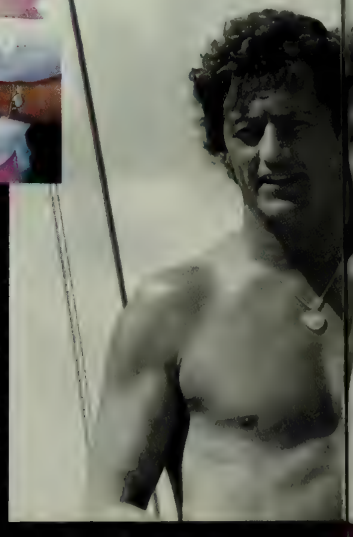
Prince Ernst knows exactly who is to blame for all the pain his life. "The media ... does not grant anyone a private life," h once complained to a German newspaper. "[They are] stalkin and spying on us, [and] must ultimately be held accountable f the abduction of children and the breaking up of marriages."

To hear his good friends in England tell it, Ernst A gust Albert Paul Otto Rupprecht Oskar Bertho Friedrich-Ferdinand Christian-Ludwig, Prince Hanover, Great Britain, and Ireland, could ha easily figured out what was going to happen to hi the moment he—a relatively obscure but tempest ous high liver with three huge properties (the family *Schloss* Marienburg, outside Hanover, plus an estate in Gut Calenber and a hunting lodge in Gmunden, Austria), an extraordinar collection of vintage cars, and two teenage sons—decided t launch a very public affair in 1996 with the dark and lovely Ca oline of Monaco. She was no stranger to media attention: th daughter of Grace Kelly and Prince Rainier, she had grown u in Monaco in a pretty pink palace with rooms named afte British and French royalty and filled with portraits of her ance tors, descendants of the 13th-century Genoese scoundrel Lan franco Grimaldi—known as "the Spiteful."

"Living life in a goldfish bowl is what the Grimaldis have a ways done," explains Sir David Llewellyn, who knew Carolin (and Ernst too, but separately) during her earlier days. "He coul not have found, outside th Princess of Wales, anybod who lives life more in a gol fish bowl if he tried."

Once divorced (from th playboy Philippe Junot af ter 28 months of marriage) once CONTINUED ON PAGE 16





MARRY OLD TIME

***Opposite,* Caroline and Ernst, off the coast of Spain, June 1997. *Above,* Caroline with newborn baby Pierre, while second husband Stefano Casiraghi holds their daughter, Charlotte, 1987. *Right,* Caroline and first husband Philippe Junot, 1980.**

find Caroline
frightening. . . .
She is so direct,
she certainly knows
what she wants.
Knows how
to get it, too."





From the summit of Iwo Jima to Hitler's Germany to the Hollywood soundstage, pioneers of a new profession created the indelible images of the 20th century. For a portfolio of 18 of photography's most enduring masters, now clicking into their 80s and 90s, DAVID FRIEND gets the likes of Joe Rosenthal, Yousuf Karsh, and Cornell Capa to recall the days when their art was young and the stories—the Depression, World War II, the space program—were big. With new portraits by Henri Cartier-Bresson

Shooting Past



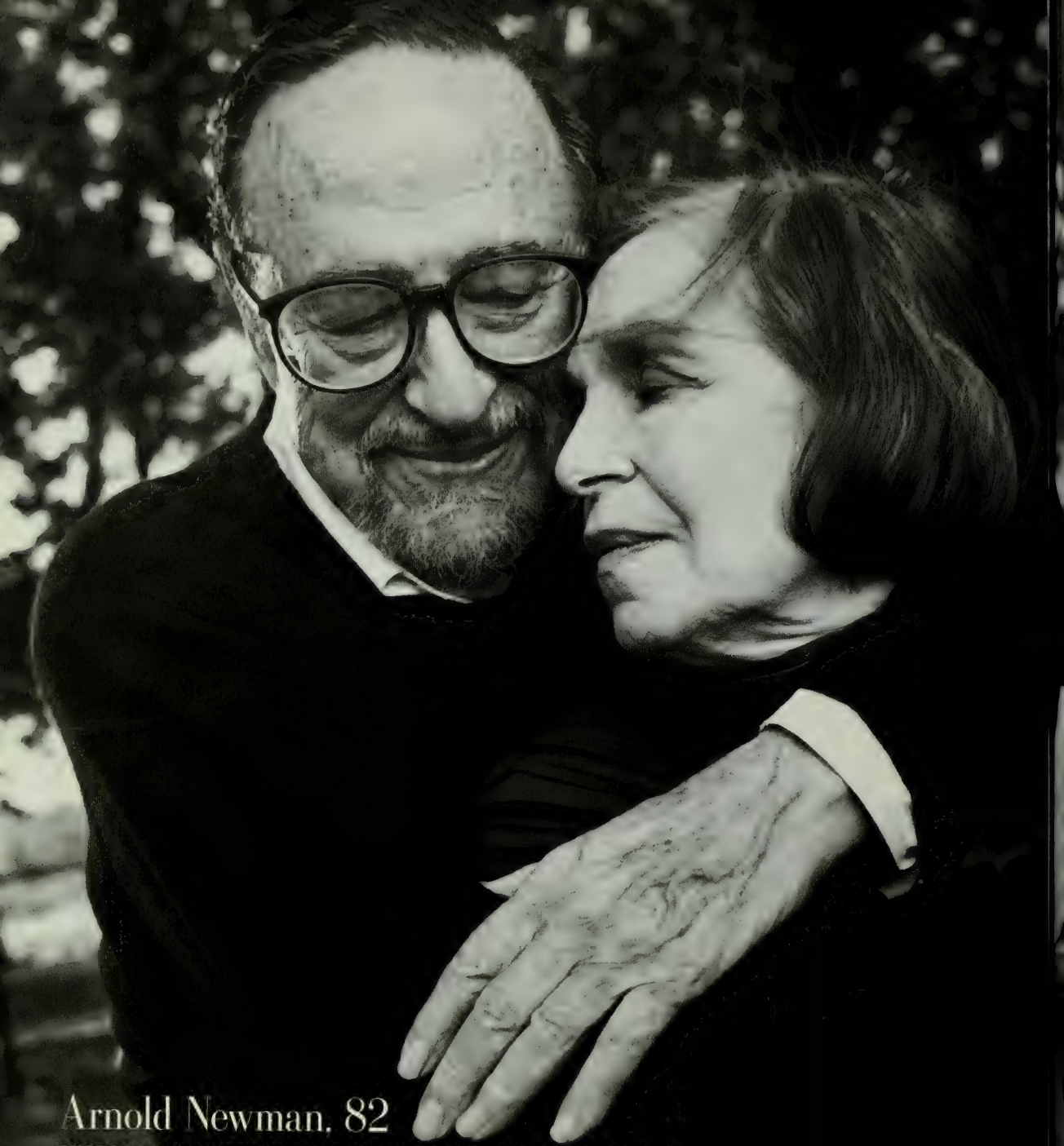
Phil Stern, 81

PHOTOGRAPHED BY HERB RITTS

Phil Stern—Hollywood photographer, kibitzer, and raconteur—on the early days: "I was wounded twice in World War II as a combat photographer. Covered the [Stateside] return of my own battalion with John Hersey for *Life*. Crossed paths with William Saroyan. We were bunkmates." On Sinatra: "He didn't appreciate studio-cafeteria lunches. So he'd have buckets of pasta from Villa Capri brought to his dressing room. He had a plane that he had decked out with a piano, like a miniature nightclub." On added value: "I had no idea about fine-art photographic prints [until] I got a call around 1982. 'You know, you're in an auction-house catalogue.' And so I am, sandwiched between Steichen and Stieglitz, [a] subliminal bamboozle. They found an old James Dean print of mine in the files of a defunct magazine and sold it for $1,200. James Dean's my old-age annuity. In one of my pictures, Dean's got that insouciant, 'fuck you' look on his face. The National Westminster Bank thought he represented rebellious youth. So they put it in a full-page ad!" On current events: "News flash. I just got a call and they want me to shoot stills for a movie starring Raquel Welch. I start tomorrow. I haven't done heavy lifting on a set in 15 years. It's being shot digitally. My life span covers silent films, talkies, celluloid, and now digital. I've been fished out of the grave!"

Photographed—with his 1953 image of Marilyn Monroe—in Los Angeles on August 2, 2000.

80



Arnold Newman, 82

PHOTOGRAPHED (WITH HIS WIFE, AUGUSTA) BY MARY ELLEN MARK

Other photographers had done it, but rarely with such power or so consistently. That is: to define individuals, especially fellow visual artists, by exploiting their workaday surroundings. Builder Robert Moses, sturdy and defiant on a precarious girder. Nazi-era arms baron Alfried Krupp, demonically ensconced in his factory lair. Composer Igor Stravinsky, off-center and dwarfed by a piano's lid shaped like some outsize flat from a page of music (opposite). For inspired visions such as these, Arnold Newman has been heralded as the father of the environmental portrait. For 51 years his own milieu has had one exquisite fixture: his wife, Gus, with whom he was photographed the week last summer when his new, eponymous book returned to press for a second printing. Newman appreciates such milestones. But by constitution he's more inclined toward melancholy. When expressing condolences to a friend about the recent folding of *Life*, which often published Newman's work, he is careful to add the Hebrew blessing *alav ha-sholom* (May it rest in peace). Then his voice quavers. "I just lost my best friend," Newman says of sculptor George Segal. "Then [painter] Jake Lawrence. Both made the front page the same day. It was dreadful." How does he cope with such loss? Love, he confides. And work. "Tomorrow, I'm going over to photograph George's studio as he left it. A record ought to be made."

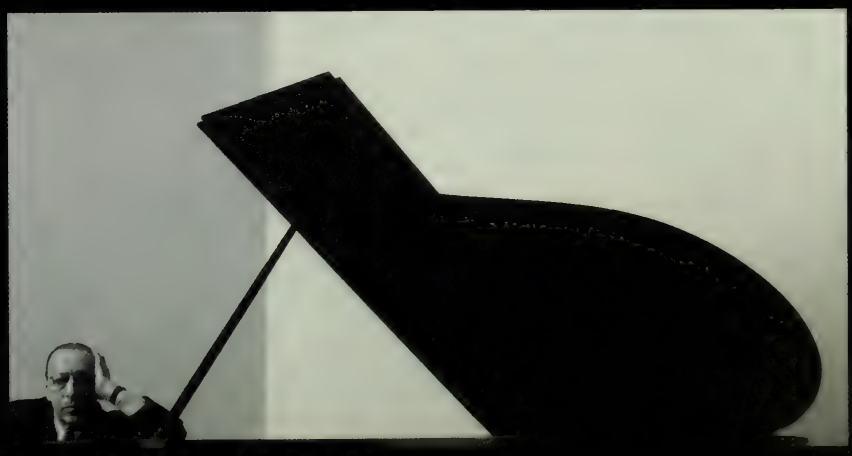
Photographed in New York City on July 18, 2000.

They are in their 80s and 90s now, master photographers all. Some are photojournalists, some portraitists; some have specialized in fashion, others in news or sports or space. But they are of a breed, and of an extraordinary era. Each came of age in the 1930s or 40s, when grave and epic events—a depression and a World War—demanded to be witnessed by an urgent, accessible medium. At the time, photography was benefiting from a technological golden age that lent it increased flexibility and immediacy. Innovations included the portable 35-mm. camera (1925); the commercial flashbulb (1929), which replaced flash powder; and the Associated Press wirephoto (1935). "It was a very short period," recalls photographer George Silk, now 84. "In the wave of a wand, here was photojournalism. [Few] professionals anywhere were using miniature cameras. Then [combat photographer] Bob Capa broke the dam, covering the Spanish Civil War in 1936. The public was being shown the world in a whole new look. Amazing."

It was a time increasingly attuned to the medium's power. The advertising boom and new printing techniques were dispersing photography ever more widely. The picture magazine, a product of 1920s Germany, became a cultural watershed in America with the birth of *Life* in 1936. And documentary photography was on the rise, thanks in part to the patronage of the Farm Security Administration, which dispatched a corps of photographers to cover the travails of rural Americans. The craft, it seemed, was acquiring a modicum of respect—or at least losing its sometimes unsavory status.

"In the 30s," says Carl Mydans, 93, a veteran of *Life* and the F.S.A., "when you told someone your son or daughter was a photographer, generally they were not impressed. A writer was important. The perception was that a photographer wore a fedora with a police card in it. He was not very well dressed. He walked beside a handsome, articulate writer. And every now and then the writer would say, 'Shoot that.' Suddenly, when *Life* started up, photography became an important profession to the general public. Even glamorous." Mydans's cohort Gordon Parks concurs. "Around that time of the F.S.A.," says Parks, 88, "the *photographer* became the star, showing poverty and affecting people. Dorothea Lange. [Margaret] Bourke-White. Walker Evans. [Marion] Post Wolcott. How could a writer compete with Arthur Rothstein's Dust Bowl photo? The writer followed the *photographer* around."

Nearly three generations later, many of the medium's most august figures are still at it. Irving Penn, 83, shoots regularly for *Vogue*. Marty Lederhandler, 83, chases the news four days a week for the New York bureau of the Associated Press. One of Japan's deans of the image, Hiroshi Hamaya, is 85. Mexico's Manuel Alvarez Bravo is 98. Luminaries such as the influential "street photographer" Helen Levitt, in her 80s, continue to exhibit their work, as do masters like aerial photographer William Garnett,



Igor Stravinsky, New York City, 1946, by Arnold Newman.



Above, Place de l'Europe, Paris, 1932, by Henri Cartier-Bresson.

Henri Cartier-Bresson, 92

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MARTINE FRANCK

It was photography's giant leap. That miraculous fraction of afternoon in 1932 when Henri Cartier-Bresson caught a passerby and his reflection (left) navigating their way across a puddle in the Place de l'Europe in Paris. In that instant, Cartier-Bresson perfected "the Decisive Moment," his term for the sublime split second when a scene achieves "equilibrium" before the lens, and a photographer aligns "his brain, eye, and heart . . . on the same axis."



e Paris-based co-founder of the seminal Magnum photo agency, has a taste for mischief
at has only sharpened with age. His rebellious pronouncements are delivered with a conviction
th charming and disarming. "Focus is a bourgeois concept!" he announces, defending the
erits of a slightly blurred print. "Photography never really interested me," he adds. "My big
citement was the *fact* of shooting. Once it's in the box, I couldn't care less." Having largely
bandoned the camera in the early 1970s—to take up the sketchpad—Cartier-Bresson,
ho is married to photographer Martine Franck, shot several of the portraits for this story
part of his first ambitious U.S. assignment in 29 years.

otographed by his wife near their home in Provence.

83, documentarian Wayne Miller, 82, architectural savant Julius Shulman, 90, and Ruth Bernhard, 95, known for her nudes and still lifes. (Two slightly younger colleagues seem indefatigable. Lennart Nilsson, who made his name photographing the human fetus, is still active at 78; fashion-and-portrait giant Richard Avedon is only 77.) One wonders if there isn't something intrinsic to the profession that encourages longevity—maybe an elixir in the waters of the darkroom stop bath. "A lot of photographers go to a ripe old age," notes Helmut Newton, who turned 80 in October. "Photography. Maybe it helps keep you virile."

Some medical experts insist that creative types in general tend to live longer. "Look at [Edward] Steichen's *The Family of Man,*" says Dr. Gene Cohen, a specialist in geriatric psychiatry who often studies art and aging. "At 75, Steichen curated what many consider the greatest photo exhibition in history. *Eisenstaedt on Eisenstaedt,* published [when Alfred Eisenstaedt was] 86, is a classic example of this."

In fact, the photographic act requires stamina, sensory acuity, the ability to make snap judgments and to handle equipment that can be delicate as well as bulky. These mental and physical demands, according to researchers, challenge both brain hemispheres and lengthen pathways between brain cells; this, in turn, may promote longer life. "You can infer from brain-science findings," insists Cohen, "that older photographers would be high on the list of beneficiaries of brain activity because of all this left- and right-side stimulation. And a new study, selecting for older 'couch potatoes' who were [also] engaged in creative pursuits, suggests that activities of the kind photographers are drawn into seem to give a positive boost to the immune system. Which means better overall health and increased longevity." Photographer Slim Aarons, 80, puts it another way: "A writer can make it up, sitting at his desk, boozing. A photographer has to be on the front lines. Your adrenaline is going. You use everything you have in your body and somehow it translates later on [in life]."

There may be something deeper still. Photographers have perspective. As a rule, they capture events or scenes that occur only once, for an extremely short spell. Yet their images allow others to share snippets of wrested time, for eternity. The best photographers have a gift for rendering the infinite within the instantaneous. "Everything I do before and as I click the shutter," says portraitist Arnold CONTINUED ON PAGE 134



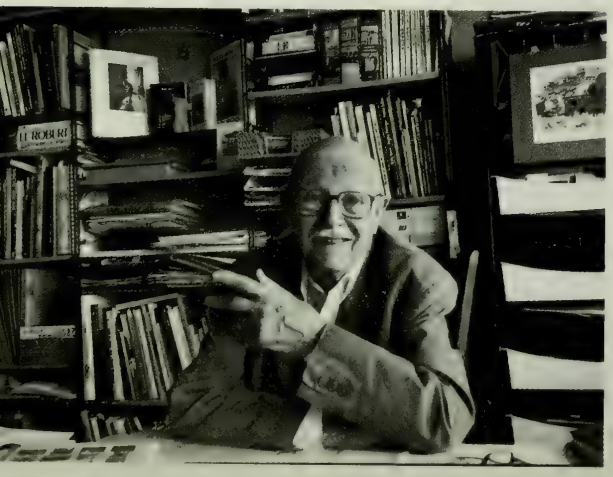
Nude in Provence, 1949, by Willy Ronis.

Willy Ronis, 90

PHOTOGRAPHED BY HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON

"I was deeply influenced by painting," says Willy Ronis, who has been called "the most important living French photographer" for his celebratory depiction of his nation's working class. "Brueghel is close to how life appears to me," he explains. "When I am in the street, I see people moving like a ballet. You have the impression that a certain theater director is conducting. You have to be very attentive to find the fantastic moment when the balance is perfectly distributed in the viewfinder." These days Ronis, from his apartment-cum-studio in southeast Paris, has been preparing six exhibitions and a book that addresses, in part, the critical choices photographers make at the moment just before the shutter trips. "A type of echo occurs," he says, having noticed "very interesting parallels" between images he created decades apart. "Schemas of composition and reaction are repeated throughout your life but are not really conscious. Every work you're producing is a self-portrait."

Photographed in his Paris office on May 27, 2000.



Yousuf Karsh, 91

PHOTOGRAPHED BY BRUCE WEBER



Winston Churchill, 1941, by Yousuf Karsh.

Some 60 years ago he plucked a cigar from Winston Churchill's scowling mouth, bringing on the thunder (*above*). Upon such audacious acts has the legend of Karsh of Ottawa, as he bills himself, been built. (Decades ago he dropped his first name, in the manner of early-20th-century masters.) But as for his brashness with Churchill, the giant will have none of it. It was not audacity, he says, but ingenuity. "'Audacious' never enters my mind. Self-confident, yes. Self-assertive, yes." Through the use of chiseled light and abundant shadow, Karsh, like a sculptor, extracts the essential stature of the world's power brokers. In return, his name is now among his profession's most celebrated. "With the advent of celebrity photography," he notes, "the photographer, too, became an object of glamour. This can be seen on the older pages of this very magazine with the portraits by my friend and mentor, Edward Steichen." This winter Karsh mounts retrospectives in Germany and Japan, but the man who has had sittings with every president since Hoover says he no longer takes pictures. Come Inauguration Day, though, he may be tempted. "Both Gore and Bush are already handsome men," he remarked when the presidential race was still up in the air, "and when either one is elected, the full weight of being the most powerful man in the world will descend upon him and add an extra dimension of character and interest to his face."

Photographed at the Ritz-Carlton hotel, near his home in Boston, on July 31, 2000.




Leni Riefenstahl, 98
PHOTOGRAPHED BY HELMUT NEWTON





, Japanese marathoner Kitei Son and, *above*, . athlete Glenn Morris in still photographs en by Leni Riefenstahl during the filming of 1938 documentary, *Olympia*.

ermany and Eastern Europe were a ucible for photographic talent between the ars. Then many budding photographers, cluding several in this portfolio, d the Nazis, pursuing their work—and eking refuge—in other lands. But ni Riefenstahl, an actress turned filmmaker, ayed on and flourished, becoming the ost influential visual propagandist of the ird Reich through now notorious ocumentaries such as *Triumph of the Will*. ter, after being exonerated by an lied tribunal of war-related charges, she ncentrated on still photography, rning her camera on anthropological bjects, including the Nuba tribesmen of dan, to produce what she called iblical images which could have dated ack to the earliest days of mankind." *ni Riefenstahl: Five Lives*, a photobiography bookstores this month, traces her ntroversial career. Still scorned in many uarters for images she created more an 60 years ago, she recently completed diving (and underwater-video) pedition in the Maldives, off Sri Lanka.

notographed at her home near Munich n June 26, 2000.



Helmut Newton, 80

PHOTOGRAPHED BY HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON

"The photographic act is not sexual," Helmut Newton insists. "When I photograph a naked woman, I can't mix the two. One is work, the other is not work." Which is more important, then, photography or sex? "Work is," he says. "Taking photos is more important than sex. Pushing the end of [your] 70s is different than when you're in your 30s." Newton's fame, nonetheless, has come from blending the two during his four decades shooting fashion for magazines such as French *Vogue*. At their best, his erotic *mise en scènes*, with their oppressively perfect models, thrill with a luxurious peril. Newton's images, many depicting nocturnal themes, seem to have been created on the vivid back lot of a dream. At age 12, he took his first camera into Berlin's subways; at 18, he fled Hitler's rise, settling in Asia, then France. Now based in Monte Carlo, he dovetails assignments—for *Vanity Fair* and others—with projects that are always writ large. Last year's *Sumo* was a 66-pound book of nudes and portraits; this fall, "Helmut Newton: Work" opened at Berlin's massive New National Gallery. Says Newton, who confesses to feeling transformed by the heart attack he survived in 1971, "The [show is] 60 percent new and fresh. I do laugh when very à la mode photographers do big retrospectives when they're 30. They'll do [my] retrospective when I'm dead."

Photographed in Paris on July 4, 2000.



***Saddle I*, Paris, 1976, by Helmut Newton.**



Life Magazine Photographers

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MICHAEL O'NEILL

GORDON PARKS, 88, CARL MYDANS, 93, CORNELL CAPA, 82, and GEORGE SILK, 84

At a recent reunion and photo session, four former *Life* photographers trade gibes like truant schoolboys. "They're too *old*," objects Cornell Capa when asked to pose with his elders. "We shoot, we sit," harrumphs George Silk after a half-hour in front of the camera. "When do we get laid?!" Inevitably, though, talk turns to '36, when *Life* was launched. "It was an immediate sellout," says Carl Mydans, one of the first five shooters on staff. Mydans (interned as a P.O.W. by the Japanese) and Silk (later a pioneering sports photographer) covered battles in Europe and the Pacific, sometimes traveling in tandem. Capa, whose brother Robert may have been history's finest combat photographer, joined *Life* as a darkroom printer in 1938, then focused his camera on politics, religion, and social themes; a leading proponent of "concerned photography" (his phrase for work that addresses humanitarian issues), Capa founded New York's International Center of Photography in 1974. Gordon Parks, like Mydans a novice when he started with the Farm Security Administration, became more famous than many of his subjects. A composer, artist, and film director (a sequel to his 1971 movie, *Shaft*, opened the week this photograph was taken), Parks was the subject of an HBO documentary in November and has just published his 17th book. But enough of noble deeds. What about the high jinks of *Life*'s heyday? "You name it, it happened," Silk asserts. "Throwing cherry bombs at three in the morning. A lion in a convertible. Dislocated my shoulder [playing] Rugby on Guy Fawkes Night. I was supposed to go the next morning with Byrd to the South Pole. We'd bust loose a little."

Photographed at the International Center of Photography Uptown in Manhattan on June 20, 2000.



Left to right: Ella Watson, *American Gothic*, Washington, D.C., 1942, by Gordon Parks; MacArthur wading ashore in the Philippines during World War II, 1945, by Carl Mydans; Bolshoi Ballet School, 1958, by Cornell Capa; Swedish high jumper Gunhild Larking at the Olympics in Melbourne, 1956, by George Silk.

zzie Sweet, 82

OTOGRAPHED BY PEGGY SIROTA

zie Sweet lives in another age, or several. former B-movie actor (who began his eer as a pirate in Cecil B. DeMille's 1942 *Reap the Wild Wind*) recently put his 75 New Hampshire farmhouse up for sale. drives a refurbished, lime-green 1950 dy. He shoots almost every day, asionally toting what he calls "a big, ieldy 8-by-10 view camera that looks like ething you'd use to cover the Civil War." in his heart of hearts it is always the mer of '52. For a magical stretch (1947 ugh the mid-60s), Sweet was crown prince ie sports portrait, his subjects always dered in blazing Crayola and Lik-m-Aid s. Sweet would coax athletes into what he d "simulated action"—marvelously hokey rades—to suggest that he had frozen real vement on slow color film. In fact, this ized technique, borrowed from Hollywood photos, served to accentuate his pictures' rming artifice. His sportsmen were ns posing as icons. And clients such as wsweek and *Sport* played along with the eetness of it all. "He's of an era where ng innocent was a good thing," says Nik nberg, *ESPN The Magazine*'s director photography. "And there's an uneven line m him to Annie Leibovitz. Lighting people doors, in color, that way, just wasn't done."

tographed at Smashbox Studios in lver City, California, on August 1, 2000.



tfielder Ralph Kiner surrounded by tograph seekers, 1950, by Ozzie Sweet.



C. Z. Guest, Villa Artemis, Palm Beach, 1969, by Slim Aarons.

im Aarons, 80

)TOGRAPHED BY JONATHAN BECKER

ographic folk wisdom, courtesy of Slim Aarons (right),the
ering, ascot-prone, much-imitated chronicler of high society (most notably
own & Country, Holiday,* and *Life*). On stature: "I'm six foot four.
re tall, you got it made. You walk in a room and you stand out like a peak.
's five-foot-four-inch Alfred] Eisenstaedt once told me, 'If I were your height,
e the *king*.'" On photo shoots: "Don't you realize? All a photographer
ds today is a great-lookin' researcher—a smasher. Eighteen assistants is all
hit. Bring along a beautiful girl Friday and you got the story."
photo-essays: "I'm not a master photographer. I'm a journalist with a
era. People forget. It isn't about one photograph, like magazines all publish
y. We were *story*tellers. The editors looked at a goddamned shot and said,
ere the hell is the opener? Where's the closer?'" On wealth: "A while ago
to magnate] Mark Getty himself came to my house and took one look and
ght my archives. I don't want to say for how much. That's the only way
have freedom in life: by having 'fuck you' money. Now I've got it.
ember that. And don't be a paid employee! I learned that from Gable."

tographed outside his home in the town of Bedford,
v York, on July 25, 2000.





The Mercury Seven astronauts and their wives, 1959, by Ralph Morse.



Ralph Morse, 83

PHOTOGRAPHED BY HARRY BENSON

Ralph Morse covered the waterfront: He photographed ball games and heart surgery and war. He covered the Normandy invasion, and at Guadalcanal, he bobbed for six hours in a bloodied Pacific after the *Vincennes*, a U.S. cruiser he was sailing on, was torpedoed. "We were specialists in everything," says Morse, describing the long careers of his *Life* cronies, such as Loomis Dean, David Douglas Duncan, and Yale Joel, all in their 80s now. They *had* to be, since the whims of the news each week would determine their whereabouts—and subjects. Morse is best remembered for his definitive pictures of the fledgling Mercury astronauts, which helped propel the flyboys into orbit as national heroes. Ever true to his nautical and aeronautical roots, the irrepressible Morse lives in Florida (an easy drive from Cape Canaveral), where he often lolls on his boat, *Lifetime*, bought with the 1997 out-of-court settlement he received after spotting one of his photos (of Jackie Robinson stealing home in the 1955 Dodgers-Yankees World Series) on the back of a Wheaties box.

Photographed on his boat in Delray Beach, Florida, on July 24, 2000.

O. Winston Link, 85

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MICHAEL O'NEILL







Drive-in, Iaeger, West Virginia, 1956, by O. Winston Link.

John Szarkowski put it best. MoMA's former director of photography considered O. Winston Link "a legitimate American genius and nut." Link (the O. is for Ogle) is known for his obsessively orchestrated studies of steam engines at night, shot in the 1950s. (Imagine scenes by Fritz Lang or Diane Arbus—with a touch of Rube Goldberg.) By rigging up elaborate, synchronized flash arrays, Link would create the illusion that he had suspended a hurtling locomotive, like some phantom dragon, against the ink-black sky of a rural-Southeast station. His pictures helped preserve a vanishing mode of transport; the specimen here (left) is now a relic warehoused by the Norfolk Southern Corp. What charmed him most about the A-class engine, so prominent in his classic drive-in photo (above), his most reproduced image? "The size of it," he says. "The smell of it. The power that it has. The load that it hauls—17,000 tons or more. The places it goes. It's great to hear it. Such a beautiful whistle. They call it a hooter. I have recordings on reel-to-reel of different A-class engines. I own the number plate off that engine: 1242. But that was stolen along with all my other stuff." (His ex-wife, Conchita, is currently doing time for grand larceny, having filched some 1,400 of his photos.) Link has settled in Westchester County, New York, and galleries now dispense his prints. "This tomato came in [once]," he says of actress (and photographer) Diane Keaton, "and wanted to buy a couple of my pictures. I didn't know who she was. Do now."

Photographed at Norfolk Southern's locomotive shop in Roanoke, Virginia, on August 2, 2000.



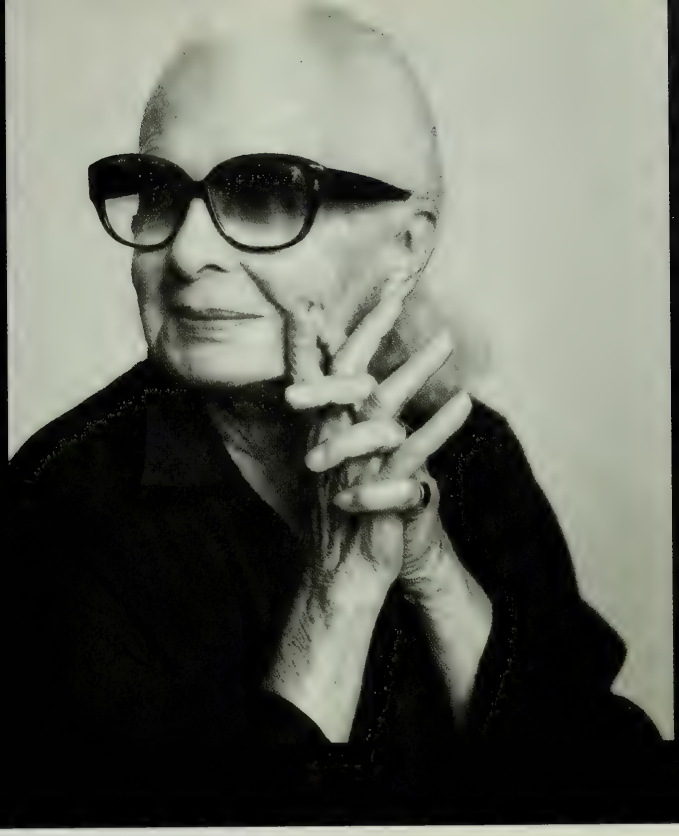
From *Harper's Baza*
1954, reinterpreted 19
by Lillian Bassm

Lillian Bassman, 83

PHOTOGRAPHED BY BRIGITTE LACOMBE

Lillian Bassman has come full circle. In the 40s, as a young art director working with design maverick Alexey Brodovitch at *Harper's Bazaar*, she liked to sneak into the nearby darkroom of portraitist George Hoyningen-Huene on her lunch hours. "I would dream up new ways of printing photographs," she says of those forays. Now she's doing her print manipulations by computer: "It's fun to experiment with it." Bassman's breakthrough fashion photographs in the 40s and 50s were fluid, ethereal, often gauzily focused. In the 70s and 80s, after destroying the bulk of her work—prints and negatives—in one grand purge, she began to concentrate on abstracts, nudes, and still lifes. She continues to shoot for magazines such as German *Vogue*, and encourages the efforts of photographer Lizzie Himmel—her daughter.

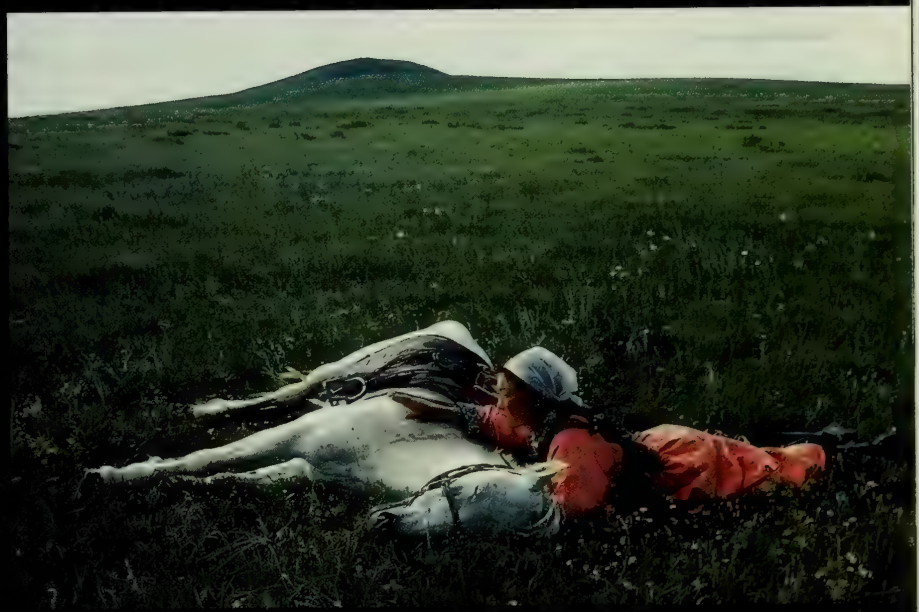
Photographed in New York City on July 28, 2000.





Eve Arnold, 87

PHOTOGRAPHED BY HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON



Militia training, Inner Mongolia, 1979, by Eve Arnold.

Intending to practice medicine, Eve Arnold picked up her first camera in 1948—a gift from a boyfriend—and turned photojournalist instead. Soon she was studying with Alexey Brodovitch (design oracle of *Harper's Bazaar*), shooting photo-essays on race and society, and traveling incessantly. "I'd call up *The* [London] *Sunday Times Magazine*," she remembers, "and say, 'I want to go to Afghanistan for a story on veiled women.' The art director, Michael Rand, wouldn't ask the cost. He'd just want to make sure you'd be back for the Christmas party." Arnold shuttled between London (her base since 1961) and Zululand, India, and Hollywood, as a member of the esteemed Magnum photo agency. She covered 40 movies, producing classic picture stories on Joan Crawford (who would often arrive for their sessions emboldened by 140-proof vodka) and Marilyn Monroe (who during one interview with a reporter, in Arnold's presence, insisted on brushing her hair as they spoke—her pubic hair). Arnold says she's busy "making words" now, having just finished two new photo books, though her camera's always at hand. "I'm still getting offers," she notes. "Ralph Fiennes called yesterday—we're on kissing terms, you know, kiss-kiss at a party—to ask me to photograph him." Whomever Arnold shoots she portrays with dignity. "If somebody lends you their face," she says, "you owe it to them not to savage them."

Photographed at the Reform Club in London on February 1, 1998.



Raising the American flag on Iwo Jima, Japan, 1945, by Joe Rosenthal.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 121 Newman, 82, "comes from a lifetime of thinking and observing. I would like to think that it results in a richer, fuller, more perceptive life. I savor moments."

Today, photography is in flux. Never has the image played a more ubiquitous role in popular culture. Never has photo "content" been a more attractive currency, as media companies snap up photo rights, and collectors vie for vintage prints and picture archives. In fact, a new format (the digital camera) and a new medium (the Internet) could have as profound an effect on photography as did the portable camera and the picture magazine more than half a century ago. Say cheese long enough and even film itself may be no more. "The drama of it all does not escape me," asserts Hollywood photographer Phil Stern, 81. "I no longer have brown fingernails. We no longer use wet chemicals in the lab. I use a computer mouse and Photoshop. The only thing wet now is the cold drink at your computer. I envy the younger guys who have all this at their disposal."

Each year, however, we lose a few more seers. Celebrity photographer Jean Howard, portraitist Gisèle Freund, *Life*'s Ed Clark and John Florea, and Nat Fein, who won the Pulitzer Prize for his Babe Ruth "farewell" shot—all in their 80s—passed away in the last 12 months. Graciously, they leave behind their distinct visions for all time. Their peers are pictured here: elder lensmen whose art, thankfully, still flourishes, helping us appreciate our time, and time itself. □

Joe Rosenthal, 89

PHOTOGRAPHED BY HARRY BENSON

On February 23, 1945, fortune mustered five Marines and a medic around a flag at the summit of Iwo Jima's Mount Suribachi—and right into the path of a waiting Speed Graphic. The moment, caught by Joe Rosenthal of the Associated Press, became a symbol of World War II and an icon of American heroism. The picture won the Pulitzer Prize, its human tableau reproduced on stamps and fashioned into granite and bronze. Last summer, *Flags of Our Fathers*, a memoir about the six men in the photo, co-authored by one of their sons, hit No. 1 on the *New York Times*'s nonfiction best-seller list. "The picture, the picture," sighs Rosenthal, weary of the fuss. "I didn't win that war. Forgive me if I say I'm tired of the whole thing." But given half a chance, he will speak volumes, with a wry smile and great pride, about that instant of valor snagged in 1/400 of a second half a century ago. "To this day," he says, "I get a kind of jolt. I remember feeling, *That's my* flag up there. I was brought up on flag-waving. I was seven when the troops returned from World War I and paraded up Pennsylvania Avenue." Today, Rosenthal is frail, living in a one-bedroom apartment in San Francisco, across the bay from his daughter. "I get through all right," he says. "But I've always dreamed of having a little farm. Maybe some other time."

Photographed near his apartment in San Francisco on June 24, 2000.


IWO
JIMA



THE CAT WHO SWALLOWED THE CANARY
Saul and Gayfryd, wearing a Scaasi extrav-organza, in their music room, 1985. Among the paintings are Rubens's *Venus and the Three Muses Mourning the Death of Adonis* and Titian's *Salome with the Head of Saint John the Baptist*.

Trailing shattered marriages and jagged histories, Saul and Gayfryd Steinberg came together in a dazzling union of 80s wealth and ambition—the legendary financier with his beautiful, couture-clad wife. After months of gossip over the $37 million sale of their Park Avenue triplex, the sale of their old-master paintings and prized antiques, and the fact that Saul's 83-year-old mother is suing him, SUZANNA ANDREWS tackles the billion-dollar questions: Where did the money go? And what lay beneath that gilded life?

VANISHED


OPULENCE

Even now, six months after the auction of much of Saul and Gayfryd Steinberg's vast collection of antique furniture, silver, and porcelain at Sotheby's, Gayfryd's friends are reluctant to talk about her, hesitant about revealing her feelings. Gayfryd Steinberg, says one friend, pausing a very long time to consider just how much she should say, "was very upset" in the weeks before the New York auction last May. It was painful for her, especially being forced to sell her silver and her porcelain. After the auction, Gayfryd "just retreated," says her friend. She hardly spoke to anyone outside her family, not answering many phone messages from friends calling to express their sympathy. The auction had been excruciating for Gayfryd, a proud woman who had worked very hard to win social prominence for herself and her husband. It had confirmed, very publicly, what had been whispered in New York society all last spring—that Saul Steinberg, 61, the legendary financier, chairman of Reliance Group Holdings, and one of New York's wealthiest men, had somehow, suddenly, lost a great deal of money.

For months the Steinbergs had been able to squelch the rumors, which had begun in late February, when the news leaked out that they had sold their 34-room triplex on Park Avenue at 71st Street—one of the biggest and most spectacular apartments in New York City—to Stephen Schwarzman, president of the Blackstone Group, reportedly for $37 million. People were stunned. Saul Steinberg, everyone knew, adored the apartment, which he had bought from the estate of John D. Rockefeller Jr. in 1971. He and Gayfryd lavished countless hours and millions of dollars decorating it palatially, filling it with 18th- and 19th-century English and French furniture and Saul's huge collection of old-master paintings. It was from this apartment that the Steinbergs had launched themselves into society, dazzling New York and filling the gossip columns in the 80s and early 90s with the opulent parties and benefits they had thrown in it.

Using his huge fortune, at times estimated to have been nearly $1 billion, Saul and Gayfryd had become the king and queen of Nouvelle Society. He was the short, stout corporate raider, she the tall, beautiful, whippet-thin trophy wife. Together they personified the extravagant excess of the 80s. In 1988 the Steinbergs were said to have spent $3 million on the wedding of Saul's daughter Laura to real-estate heir Jonathan Tisch, which featured gowns by Scaasi for the bride and her nine bridesmaids and, at a sit-down dinner for 500 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, a seven-foot Grand Marnier gâteau and 50,000 French roses. A year later, Gayfryd spent $1 million on Saul's 50th-birthday party, held at their Quogue, Long Island, estate in a tent decorated as a Flemish drinking hall with 10 *tableaux vivants* of Saul's favorite old masters—including Rembrandt's nude *Danaë*. Even into the 90s, after the Steinbergs had toned down their lifestyle, when people talked about them they talked about their money. Which is why so many people believed Gayfryd when she had put out the word that all was well. With only one child left at home, she told friends, her family no longer needed a 34-room apartment.

Only the Steinbergs' closest friends knew that last winter, while the couple were denying the rumors of trouble, Sotheby's experts were moving through their home, meticulously cataloguing their Regency silver, the George II gilt-wood armchairs, the ormolu tables, the alabaster lamps, and the George III four-poster bed. By the time the auction was made public in April, it was also known that Saul Steinberg had asked his friend the art dealer Richard Feigen to handle the sale of 56 old-master paintings, valued at $60 million—the bulk of his collection. But even then, people did not understand how bad things were. Publicly, Gayfryd behaved as though nothing were wrong. The day before the auction, she lunched with the dress designer Arnold Scaasi at Amaranth, an East Side restaurant where one goes to be seen and which was around the corner from the Steinbergs' new three-bedroom apartment at the Helmsley Carlton Hotel. All was well, Gayfryd told *The New York Times* matter-of-factly; she and her husband were simply selling the "palace furniture." On May 26, as collectors, dealers, and the public were at Sotheby's for six hours bidding on the couple's belongings, which sold for some $12.5 million, Gayfryd and Saul Steinberg were preparing to leave Manhattan for their Long Island estate, where they remained, "basically hiding," says a friend, for much of the summer.

Just what happened to S Steinberg's money is a qu tion that the Steinbergs' frie wish people would stop a ing. Many of them, weal and socially prominent N Yorkers themselves, feel t the Steinbergs have suffered enough. "T have shown great quality, great quality in vail. They are not moping around, they paying their debts. They have done it w dignity," says one friend. "Gayfryd has b terrific. I think she's handled herself bea fully through all of this," says the socia Nan Kempner. "They've been misrepres ed in the press, in part due to their naïvet says another friend angrily. "They've b caricatured."

The couple, friends insist, have chang Saul's 60th birthday, they say, was celeb ed quietly. In honor of his passion for hi ry, his family accompanied him on a trip the Normandy beaches. Gayfryd's 50 birthday party, last January, friends no wasn't even given by the couple but by h friends Louise Grunwald, the wife of *Ti* editor emeritus Henry Grunwald, and S san Burden, widow of politician and bo collector Carter Burden. And, friends po out, the marriage in 1999 of Saul's son Jo athan—whose own company, Individual I vestor, is also facing financial problems— Maria Bartiromo, CNBC's "Money Ho ey," was a low-key affair held at the famil Quogue home.

But many of the Steinbergs' friends d not know where all their money went, o for that matter, where it had come fro Among the people who do—the financie on Wall Street who have dealt with Ste berg, the bankers who have financed hi and angry Reliance shareholders—there a those who believe that Steinberg got wh he deserved. For nearly 20 years, his cr ics say, he has used Reliance, a public held company since 1986, for his perso gain and his family's. He put his relativ in executive positions and paid them, a himself, huge salaries. Over the years, R liance paid out millions and millions dollars in personal loans, perks, and fat d idends to Steinberg family members. Wi a board of directors that included longtim friends—such as Carter Burden, Loral Co poration chairman Bernard Schwartz, a the banker George Baker—Steinberg w able to make business decisions that a pear to have, over time, weakened th company but benefited his family. Still, th fact that today Reliance is teetering on th verge of bankruptcy—its stock, bonds, an bank debt worth almost nothing—comes a a surprise.

How could Saul Steinberg, regarded a



SOCIAL STUDIES
The Steinbergs at a Metropolitan Museum of Art gala, early 1990s. In the mid-80s, Gayfryd was so enthusiastic that she once wore a long mousseline gown and diamond bracelets to host a ladies' tea. "She'll learn in time that she doesn't have to bring out her artillery in the afternoon," said one socialite. Gayfryd eventually did become one of New York's most fashionable beauties.

"It wasn't just excess. It wasn't just ormolu. . . .
It's very difficult for normal people to understand."

one of the most brilliant and terrifying financiers of the last two decades, have allowed things to get so bad? How could he have gotten into a situation so desperate that in September he was sued by his 83-year-old mother, Anne, who claimed that she was financially strapped because of Reliance's problems and that her son would not repay $4.73 million she had lent him? "The myth of Saul Steinberg was much greater than the reality," says a well-known Wall Street banker who knows Steinberg. "You could argue that both of them, Saul and Gayfryd, were figments of their own imaginations, that they invented themselves."

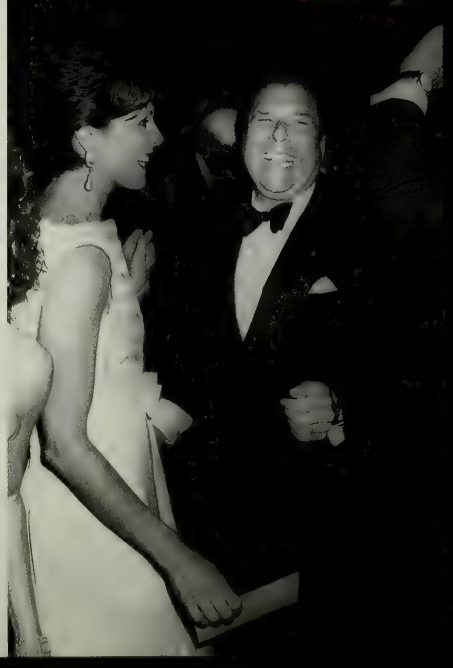
Shortly before the Sotheby's auction, Gayfryd withdrew two small items from the sale, a pair of Chelsea Strawberry Leaf sauceboats, circa 1755. It was a surprising choice, touching in a way. The lovely sauceboats, valued at between $4,000 and $6,000, were probably the simplest pieces at the auction. In their nearly 17 years of marriage, Gayfryd and Saul had amassed much more extraordinary things.

A 20-foot-long George III mahogany four-pedestal table, which sold for $125,000, and 23 George III chairs, which sold for $100,000, had graced their mirrored and gilt-encrusted main dining room. At one point, *The King Drinks,* a massive work by the 17th-century Flemish painter Jacob Jordaens, now being sold by Feigen and thought to be worth some $6 million, hung over the sideboard. The $42,500 George III four-poster, with a painted frieze and hung with swagged light-green silk, was the centerpiece of one of their many guest rooms. And in the foyer of their home, the Steinbergs had placed the piece that brought the highest price at Sotheby's: an ornate George III ormolu-mounted mahogany writing commode that went for $2 million, well below its estimate of $3 million to $4 million.

"You walked into that apartment and it was stunning," says a former guest of the Steinbergs'. "No one lives like that except to make a statement. It was a museum." Among the highlights of the Steinbergs' collection of old-master paintings was *The Plague in an Ancient City,* by the 17th-century Flemish painter Michael Sweerts, which was sold to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 1997 for $3.85 million. There were works by Jan Brueghel the Elder, François Boucher, and Giovanni Battista







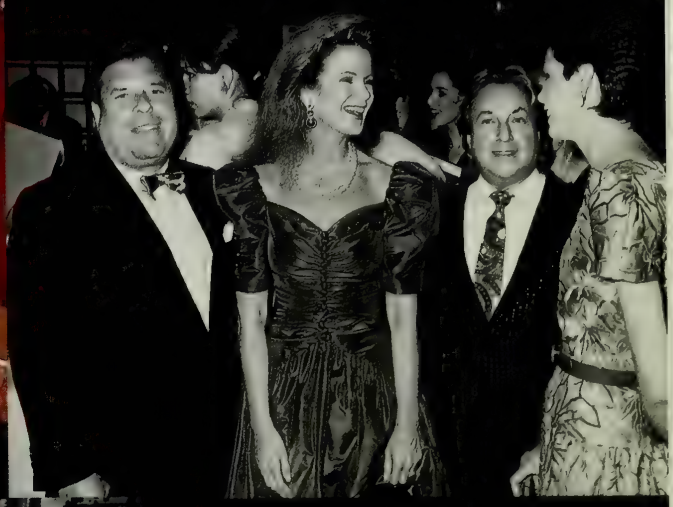
SWEET CHARITY
From top: **Saul with junk-bond king Mi Milken, 1996. Saul and his first wife, Barbara, mid-1960s. Saul, Claudia Col and then husband Ronald Perelman, an Gayfryd, 1989. Gayfryd and Saul at a PEN dinner, 1990; as president of the Friends of PEN, Gayfryd raised 60 per of the organization's money, but some writers objected to PEN's association w the Steinbergs.** ***Opposite, clockwise from top left:*** **Saul with his son Jonathan, 19 Gayfryd in her dining room, 1985; Saul, socialite Blaine Trump, designer Arnold Scaasi, and Gayfryd at a New Y City Opera benefit, 1988; Saul and Gayfryd at daughter Laura's wedding to Jonathan Tisch, 1988; Saul at his 50th birthday party, which featured 10** ***tableaux vivants*** **of his favorite old masters, 1989 writer Larry McMurtry, one of Gayfryd's PEN allies, with Gayfryd, 19 Gayfryd with Carolyne Roehm, then Mrs. Henry Kravis and now her busines partner, 1991; Gayfryd and Saul at a western-themed benefit, 1989.**

as being "perfumed" by his association with writers."













Moroni, and a Cavallino, *The Triumph of Galatea,* which was sold by Feigen to the National Gallery of Art in May for about $2 million. In addition to the old masters, which hung on walls covered with crimson Fortuny printed cotton, there were countless Italian Renaissance bronzes, ormolu candlesticks, and shelves crammed with Gayfryd's collection of Chinese export porcelain—at Sotheby's one plate alone sold for $7,000. All of it was arrayed in rooms filled with gilt-edged couches and chairs upholstered in red velvet—the décor the work of the late decorator Mark Hampton.

"It takes guts to buy those paintings and that furniture. It wasn't just excess," says a friend. "It wasn't just ormolu, the way it was portrayed. It was a very specific grand taste," she says. "It's very difficult for normal people to understand. The scale of that apartment was enormous." And it very much reflected how the Steinbergs wanted to be seen. "In the great English country homes, they live with extraordinary art and make a house a home. That's my goal," Gayfryd told *Town & Country* in a 1985 article, for which she was photographed wearing a bib-size mesh choker of diamonds and pearls by Fred Leighton and a Scaasi Cinderella-style silk-organza evening dress as Saul, in a tuxedo, stood proudly at her side. Her home "was such a throwback to a Frick, a Carnegie, or a Morgan, and the way they imagined the Medicis would live," says one art dealer.

"Saul was not one of these men who made a fortune and had nothing in him," says one friend. "He wanted to be a mogul, a Vanderbilt, an Astor, a Lehman. Which is rather nice these days, when all those young billionaires have no idea what to do with their money."

"I find him rather beguiling. He's funny and congenial and rather cozy," says an art expert cultivated by the Steinbergs. "He was like a character out of a novel of new-rich people. He was so funny-looking and so full of himself," this man recalls.

"Here is a guy who wanted to be accepted and be rich and be a patron, and he did it," says a financier. "[Leveraged-buyout king] Henry Kravis did it, too, but he was more low-key and smooth. Kravis also never really took on the Establishment. Saul Steinberg did, early on. He was a pariah, mucking around in places that didn't want him."

"You watch. Like the Rockefellers, I'll own the world. I could even be the first Jewish president," Saul Steinberg once boasted to the columnist Dan Dorfman. In August of 1968, when he turned 29, Steinberg had already become something of a business phenomenon. *Forbes* magazine had recently declared that he had made more money on his own than any other American under the age of 30. Said to be worth some $50 million—a pittance in this era of 25-year-old dot-com billionaires but a huge fortune back then—Steinberg was living with his first wife, Barbara, in a 29-room mansion on Long Island.

Born in Brooklyn and raised on Long Island, Saul was the oldest of Julius and Anne Steinberg's four children. Julius owned Ideal Rubber Products, a company that manufactured such things as kitchen dish racks, and his children—Saul, Robert, Roni, and Lynda—grew up in comfort. Saul was by far the most promising and ambitious of the four children, "his mother's angel, who could do no wrong," says a friend of Barbara Steinberg's. He subscribed to *The Wall Street Journal* in high school and went to college at the Wharton School of Finance when he was just 16, graduating at 19. Brash and brilliant, Saul was also a maverick thinker. He made his first takeover attempt, of O'Sullivan Rubber Co., when he was a college senior, although he didn't have the money to complete the deal.

After graduating from Wharton in 1959, Steinberg went to work for his father and uncle. Two years later, with a $25,000 loan from his father, he started his own business—leasing computers—in his father's Brooklyn factory, with his father and uncle as partners. The Ideal Leasing Company, as it was first called, was based on the ultimately very profitable assumption that as IBM's industrial computers became obsolete ever sooner, corporations would pay a lot of money to rent instead of buy them. In 1965 he renamed the company the Leaseco Data Processing Equipment Corporation and took it public, raising some $750,000. By then the computer business was soaring, and so was Leaseco's stock price. It shot through the roof, propelled by a brief but intense stock-market passion in the mid- to late 60s for young, fast-growing companies. The outsize market valuation of these companies gave them the power to take over much larger, more established corporations. Which is wh Steinberg did in the spring of 1968, when h made a hostile run at the Reliance Insu ance Company, a staid 151-year-old Philade phia fire-and-casualty underwriter, whic was nearly 10 times Leaseco's size.

Steinberg's takeover of Reliance marke him as one of the earliest corporate raider From the outset, insurance was not Stei berg's real interest. Rather, it was the pa premiums insurance companies held their coffers. Steinberg was among the fir financiers to recognize the value of this va pool of investable funds.

It was Steinberg's next deal, howe er—his 1969 attempt to take ov New York's Chemical Bank, no the Chase Manhattan Corpor tion—that branded him as an ou cast, as a dangerous corporate s cial climber, "an untouchable," sa one banker.

"I think that a lot of the attitude to Sa today is the residue of his run again Chemical, which the Establishment will *ne er* forget," says a close friend. "It affecte him being on the board of the Metropolita Museum. I think he would have liked to b on the board, and he wasn't." Even thoug over the years Steinberg has given gene ously to the Metropolitan, he never gaine entry into what is probably New York's mo exclusive social club.

In 1969, when Steinberg boldly attempte to take control of Chemical with his inflate Leaseco shares, it was the nation's sixt largest bank and the lender to some of th

"A nice old Jewish lady is not going to sue he

country's biggest corporations. It wasn't y Chase, which had been run by the Rock fellers (and merged with Chemical in 1995 but it was still one of the Waspiest pillars corporate America. It was also a bank whos consumer deposits were insured by the fede al government and whose financial healt therefore, was essential. The prospect of i being taken over by a 29-year-old who had n banking experience was understandably scar

It was, looking back, a misjudgment o Steinberg's part to think that he could g away with a takeover of Chemical. The E tablishment was, predictably, outraged, an it fought back. Prominent C.E.O.'s threa ened to withdraw their business fro Leaseco, and even New York's then gove nor, Nelson Rockefeller, got involved. A one point it was suspected, though neve proved, that several major banks united t

Leaseco shares, driving down the price. Steinberg was forced to back down. Some people, including Steinberg, suggested that anti-Semitism may have been behind his defeat. Perhaps, but a very real culprit was Steinberg's oversize ambition. "I always knew there was an Establishment," Steinberg said at the time. "I just used to think I was part of it."

Steinberg was 32 when he bought John D. Rockefeller Jr.'s apartment at 740 Park Avenue in 1971, two years after the Chemical debacle. The apartment, only part of the original Rockefeller home, which had consisted of 90 rooms, had been on the market for some time, part of the estate of Rockefeller's second wife, Martha Baird Rockefeller. Steinberg paid a mere $75,000 for it.

Friends of Barbara Herzog Steinberg, whom Saul had married in 1961, say they believe it was her idea to buy the apartment. The mother of Saul's three oldest children, Laura, Jonathan, and Nicholas, Barbara—who died last year at the age of 58—had met Saul in high school. The marriage, however, began to fall apart soon after the move to 740 Park. "Barbara said that the minute Saul got rich, women started coming on to him; it was manageable at first, but then, well, there were other problems," says a friend of Barbara's. Rumors that Steinberg had a cocaine problem surfaced around this time, although they didn't become public until 1980, when he denied them.

In 1977, Steinberg was involved in a political scandal that helped cement his bad-boy image. Although never proved, it was alleged that Steinberg had bribed a New York politician in order to win a lucrative contract to build bus shelters in New York City. Despite a city investigation, he was never charged. A year later the S.E.C. accused Steinberg of violating securities laws by touting the stock of the Pulte Home Corporation to friends as he was planning to sell his shares. Steinberg settled with the S.E.C.

Barbara Steinberg divorced Saul in 1977, claiming abandonment. Three years earlier, on a business trip to Los Angeles, he had met Laura Sconocchia Fisher, a P.R. consultant at the time and now in the antiques business. She's also remembered as a habitué of Xenon and Studio 54, "a major party girl," says a man who knew her. Saul married Laura in December of 1978, two months after their son, Julian, was born. Their breakup, barely two years later, was a tabloid scandal. "My husband is a cocaine addict and he's been on the drug off and on for two and a half years, and at times he gets very violent and very dangerous," the *New York Post* quoted her as saying in court papers. "My husband beat me up several times all through the years," the paper also reported she told a judge.

In a lawsuit she filed, Laura alleged that Saul had used $190,000 of Reliance's money to buy "illegal drugs, including but not limited to the purchase of cocaine," that he had used Reliance funds to decorate the apartment at 740 Park and to buy a private jet. She also alleged that he had made a $100,000 "contribution" to a New York City official to get the bus-shelter contract. "Everything she has said so far is a goddamn lie," Steinberg told *Fortune* magazine that year. "I'm dealing with an outraged and vengeful woman." Laura recanted her accusations after the divorce settlement.

This point in Steinberg's life was perhaps his lowest. "He is a genius who has led a notorious and sleazy life," an associate told *Fortune* about Saul in 1980.

"Saul was a mess when he met Gayfryd," says one friend. "She really cleaned him up." "He adores her, he has so much respect for her," says another friend. "She brought a lot of clear thinking to his life. She is very strong, she could stand up to him." But Gayfryd, too, was in a great deal of trouble when she met Saul.

Gayfryd Dorothea McNabb was born in 1950 and raised in the town of Nanaimo, near Vancouver, in Canada. Her father, Ross, was a telephone-company clerk; her mother, Margaret, a homemaker. The family was not well-to-do, but, says a friend of Gayfryd's, had "very good values" and aspirations. "My mother, who felt women should look like ladies, was *quite* influential," Gayfryd told *Town & Country* in 1994. "I had white gloves until college." Gayfryd began college at the University of British Columbia, but dropped out at 19 to marry John MacLean, who, she has said, was a metallurgical engineer. MacLean took her to South Africa, where she finished college, earning a degree in psychology and sociology. By 1973, when Gayfryd and her husband moved to New Orleans, the marriage was already fraying. She described him to *Vanity Fair* in 1986 as a husband who "used to say, 'While you're in town, buy yourself a birthday card.'"

Gayfryd worked at a psychiatric hospital, in the adolescent ward, for a year after her move to New Orleans. According to people who knew her then, she also worked, variously, in a travel agency, in a restaurant, and as a designer of waitress costumes for a restaurant owned by Jimmy Moran, a colorful New Orleans character. While working for Moran, she met his friend Norman Johnson, a hugely charming, hugely wealthy self-made man who owned a business that sold oil pipes. Twenty-one years her senior, married, with three children, Johnson fell madly in love with the beautiful Gayfryd. Shortly after meeting her, he divorced his wife. Gayfryd was also eager to marry Johnson, perhaps too eager. In March 1976 she divorced MacLean in the Dominican Republic and married Johnson the following month. Soon after, however, the Johnsons learned that Louisiana did not recognize Dominican divorces, and although she lived with Johnson as Mrs. Norman Johnson, Gayfryd had to remarry him, which she did in October 1977. Their son, Jeremy Rayne Johnson, who was later adopted by Saul Steinberg, was born two months later.

The Johnsons bought one of the biggest houses in New Orleans, a massive Italian Renaissance–style villa on Saint Charles Street, in the city's most fashionable area. Gayfryd had the house completely renovat-

on for nothing. Saul was the pride of her life."

That Steinberg was having problems, however, was clear. In 1972 he was sued by the Woodmere Academy, a private school on Long Island, because he would not pay $200,000 he had pledged for a new library. He claimed that he was short of cash because he had donated heavily to Israel during the Yom Kippur War, and had given some $250,000 to Richard Nixon's reelection campaign. (Steinberg eventually paid Woodmere when his finances improved.) To be sure, in 1974 and 1975, Steinberg was struggling. Reliance, under pressure from a downturn in the property and casualty insurance industry, reported heavy losses, and Steinberg's paper fortune of $90 million suddenly dropped to $8 million. There were rumors on Wall Street that he could not pay the maintenance at 740 Park and had to borrow money.

ed, and then, with the help of an interior decorator, Tom Collum, she scoured art and antiques shops to fill it with 18th-century French and English furniture and an art collection, consisting largely of American Impressionists. Soon, Gayfryd began to make forays into New Orleans society, offering her house for fund-raising dinners for the local ballet and other groups. The New Orleans papers reported on her parties—including a dinner for 50, with drinks served in the pool house, and each table for 10 set with different china, crystal, and silver.

Gayfryd, certainly, had come far. Her jewels were worth at least $5 million, she said in a court proceeding in 1984. "Norman didn't have one Learjet, he had two," recalls his friend and attorney John Martzell.

Despite Gayfryd's efforts she and her husband were not welcomed into New Orleans society. "It is very structured here, one step removed from the Indian caste system," says one New Orleans social observer. The Johnsons were perceived as ostentatious social climbers. According to *The Times-Picayune,* Gayfryd was voted down for membership in the Junior League. "They were like Houstonians," one Junior League member said. "Everything they did was splendiferous."

Martzell, for one, dismissed the snobbery and criticism. "Norman was an exceedingly sweet person and funny, one of the funniest people, almost irresistible," he recalls. "Gayfryd was charming and very intelligent." She started her own oil-pipe business, New ERA, with a friend, he recalls. As a woman-owned business, it qualified for minority set-aside contracts. "It was a smart idea," says Martzell, who admired Gayfryd for the fact that "even though the Junior League wouldn't have her, she would still go to their functions." She was also, he says, "a terrific mother." It was largely because of her that Johnson fought his first wife for custody of their children, and won. "Gayfryd would stick notes on the back door that said things like 'Brush your teeth or die,'" he remembers.

But there was trouble beneath the gilded surface. "Norman was a very complex fellow," recalls his friend R. King Milling, president of the Whitney National Bank. Johnson struggled with depression. Several times he tried to kill himself, including once at the Pierre Hotel, in New York, when Gayfryd had to get help in breaking down the door to save him. After one suicide attempt, according to a lawsuit Gayfryd later filed to get sole custody of their son, Johnson almost ran Gayfryd down in his car as she held Rayne in her arms.

In October 1982, Norman Johnson pleaded guilty to having defrauded the I.R.S. of $7 million in a scheme that had lasted throughout much of his marriage to Gayfryd. Eventually the I.R.S. seized many of the Johnsons' possessions, including their house, their art, and Gayfryd's jewels. Martzell remembers the day, shortly before Halloween, when he was with Johnson, talking to him about the prison term he might be facing. Gayfryd had decided that the two of them would go to a Halloween party dressed as Friar Tuck and Maid Marian, "and there we were," Martzell recalls, "talking about awful things, and there was Gayfryd, on her knees, hemming his monk's outfit. Gayfryd was a tough cookie," he says.

Gayfryd met Saul Steinberg about three weeks later, at a dinner party thrown by Richard Feigen in New York. Steinberg was said to have been immediately smitten with her. But they didn't meet again until January 1983. Gayfryd was on her way back from London, where she had gone to speak with Norman Johnson, who, awaiting sentencing, had fled there. She waited at the Connaught hotel for nearly a week, but he would speak with her only by phone. He had had plastic surgery to alter his appearance and said he was never coming back. He begged her to join him.

In New York, Gayfryd called Feigen, who invited her to join him at a dinner at Saul's. This time she was ready. "You know, I thought, This is a very attractive guy. Anyway, I was looking for someone to be bad with that night and this seemed to be it," she told *Vanity Fair* in 1986.

That May, Johnson, who did return to New Orleans, was sentenced to 14 months in prison. Gayfryd had filed for divorce several weeks before, in early March. In July she and Rayne moved into 740 Park Avenue with Saul. On December 22, hours after her divorce from Johnson was finalized, Gayfryd, newly converted to Judaism, married Steinberg. "I remember I got Norman out of jail several months early," says Martzell, "but by that time she was gone."

On July 18, 1985, Norman Johnson checked into a 14th-floor suite at the Lincoln Park Hotel in Houston. At 2:05 P.M., according to witnesses, he sat on the balcony railing, with his legs hanging over, then leaned out and dropped to his death.

"I sat next to Gayfryd one night and she told me all about her husband being in jail. It was very smart, because people would find out about it anyway," one New Yorker recalls. "I remember it was very sensationalistic. A lot of people preferred that to [some socialites'] stories about convent schools they never went to, mispronouncing their names," he says. "Gayfryd was very refreshing. She did not put on airs at all, like some of these other t phy wives did."

"At first, people were skeptical of G fryd," says one social arbiter. Certainly, the early days, there were instances wh Gayfryd's social ambition was so over t top that it raised eyebrows. One socialite w attended a ladies' tea at the Steinbergs' w greeted by Gayfryd dressed in a long mo seline gown with diamond bracelets dripp from both wrists. "She was very nice," t woman commented afterward, "but sh learn in time that she doesn't have to bri out her artillery in the afternoon."

Unlike New Orleans socie New York's—which is l rigid and was being in trated by many of thc who had become rich the 80s stock-market boon did not shut Gayfryd o With her lavish parties, her husband's la donations to charities, and their dazzli art collection, Gayfryd began to be notic "You roll out the bowl of caviar and peo come. That's New York," says a man in th world. "She won them over because she w so nice."

And Gayfryd and Saul Steinberg were fu They were quite witty and loved to have good time. Both were also voracious rea ers, so conversation with them was rar dull. "They go together," says one acqua tance. "They're bright, they're sassy, they a little vulgar. You could see them as a c ple in love." After Gayfryd, says one of h friends, "there was never a rumor of ano er woman and Saul, never." There was al never another rumor about drugs. Gayfr put her husband on a diet, locked the refr erator at night, forced him to go to t Canyon Ranch spa regularly for hiking a exercise. She also became, as she had w Johnson's children, something of the perfe stepmother to Steinberg's four children his previous wives. On most nights, ev when Saul and Gayfryd had parties to tend, the family, which soon includ Gayfryd and Saul's own daughter, Gayfr Holden, dined together. They discuss books that Saul recommended. Gayfryd s pervised their chores and their music lesso "Gayfryd never wanted to have childr who were spoiled brats, and she didn't," sa a friend of hers.

"Underneath those designer clothes says a friend, "is a really good woman remember Holden's birthday party abo 10 years ago, when Gayfryd made abo 40 miniature-doll cakes. They were ama ing. She didn't have the cook or caterer it. She made one of Saul's sons help h in the kitchen and did it herself." Gayfr

"They have shown great quality in travail. They are not moping around."



LIVING LARGE
Gayfryd and Saul Steinberg, at his daughter Laura's 1988 wedding, said to have cost $3 million, to real-estate heir Jonathan Tisch, at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art.

was, by all accounts, much loved by her stepchildren. She, not Barbara, planned the entire $3 million wedding of Barbara's daughter, Laura, to Jonathan Tisch. "Gayfryd sort of took over," recalls one friend. "Barbara just stepped aside."

By 1990, Gayfryd had won the social stature she appeared to seek. She was crowned by *W* magazine as "the queen" of Nouvelle Society. Her picture was constantly on the social pages of New York papers. She projected an aura of belonging, but not completely. "She was very bright, and different because of that," says one society columnist. "A lot of those social wives are very sweet, but not the sharpest knives in the drawer." Gayfryd was serious and disciplined. "I decided intellectual anorexia on Park Avenue was not going to be my chief occupation," she once said, even though her life consisted largely of decorating, shopping, and throwing parties. "Maybe it's guilt. I grew up in a very middle-class background, and I was taught to share, to be grateful for what you have," she told *W*, listing "energy and enthusiasm" as her strongest social qualities. "It's something women don't understand—that being coy and demure isn't necessarily useful." There was an aloofness about her, as though she was not entirely at peace with the life she had worked so hard to create.

Like many socialites, Gayfryd adopted a charity. Her choice reflected her intellectual interests: PEN, the international writers' organization. Gayfryd began to raise money for it shortly after she had met Norman Mailer in 1985, when he was PEN's president. She worked tirelessly for the writers' group and was so successful as a fund-raiser that by 1990 she was bringing in about 60 percent of PEN's income. With the luncheons, teas, and readings she hosted at 740 Park, and her benefit dinners, Gayfryd boosted PEN's visibility enormously. PEN, in turn, put the Steinbergs firmly on the social map. Suddenly, Saul and Gayfryd and their Wall Street friends were photographed socializing with such authors as Mailer, Allen Ginsberg, Joyce Carol Oates, Jerzy Kosinski, and Tom Wolfe. The money crowd was impressed, and many writers not only were grateful to the Steinbergs, they liked them, especially Gayfryd, who became president of Friends of PEN.

But there were some, including E. L. Doctorow, David Halberstam, and Ken Auletta, who were concerned about PEN's association with Saul Steinberg. In the summer of 1990, Auletta, who had just joined PEN's executive board, made that public, telling *New York* magazine that Steinberg was a "pretty sleazy character." There was a flurry of apologies to the Steinbergs from such writers as William Styron and Larry McMurtry, and much criticism of Auletta. Nevertheless, Gayfryd resigned from PEN, hurt by the "sleazy" remark and by suggestions that she and Saul were gaining respectability on the backs of writers.

In part, Auletta was "appalled by the ostentation" of some of Gayfryd's fund-raisers, he says today. He was also concerned about PEN's heavy reliance on one source of funds. But the main problem was Saul and how he had been making his money. "He had done some greenmail. He wasn't the only one, but a lot of it, I thought, was unsavory, legal blackmail," says Auletta. "I was troubled that Saul at that point in time had a somewhat unsavory reputation and yet he was being 'perfumed,' if you will, by his association with writers."

Outside Wall Street circles, not a lot was known in 1990 about Steinberg as a businessman. By that time he was a peripheral figure on Wall Street, one of the less respected members of a group of businessmen who had attached themselves in the 1980s to Michael Milken, the junk-bond impresario who served two years in prison in the early 90s for securities-law violations. Steinberg was not like Ted Turner, Craig McCaw, or Rupert Murdoch, all of whom turned to Milken and his junk-bond network to build companies. Nor was he even a true "corporate raider," like Carl Icahn, who took over companies, busted them up, and tried to boost their value for resale. Steinberg was among those who used Milken—"and who got used by Milken," says one banker—mainly to make money.

Although he made some investments over the years that he stuck with, in Symbol Technologies and Frank B. Hall, he was better known for greenmailing companies. Steinberg took large stakes, often with funds provided by Milken's junk bonds, which would scare boards of directors into paying him to go away. His greenmail attack on Lomas & Nettleton Financial Corporation earned him $15 million, his raid on Penn Central $8 million, and his greenmailing of Quaker State made him $10.5 million. His most famous greenmail assault, on Disney in 1984, in which he was backed by $1.5 billion in junk bonds, made him some $32 million. And Steinberg helped Milken in return. In 1985, when Wickes, a lumber and building-materials retailer, hired Salomon Brothers on a deal instead of Milken's bank, Drexel Burnham Lambert, Steinberg was among the Milken cronies who began buying up Wickes's shares until the company's intimidated C.E.O. backed down and made Drexel its banker. That same year, Steinberg bought close to 15 percent of Green Tree Acceptance following the finance company's refusal to buy junk bonds from Drexel. Shortly after Green Tree sued him and Drexel, Steinberg sold his shares back to the company for a profit of $26 million, and the suit was dropped.

The vehicle that Steinberg used for these transactions was Reliance, and by 1990 there were already concerns about how it was being run. Some say the trouble began in 1982, when Steinberg took Reliance private, buying the shares he didn't already own—nearly 50 percent of the company—in a leveraged buyout financed by $55 million of junk bonds.

The family almost immediately began to feed at the trough. Steinberg doled out more shares of the company to his sisters, Roni Sokoloff, whose husband, Bruce, was an officer of Reliance, and Lynda Jurist, each of whom eventually came to own 5 percent of Reliance. In 1982, in addition to his $2.7 million compensation package, Saul took out a personal loan of $36.4 million from Reliance; his brother, Robert, borrowed $7.7 million, and Bruce Sokoloff borrowed $3.2 million. Saul also bought a condominium in Florida and then immediately had Reliance buy it from him for $350,000. The Steinberg family also sold Reliance a 47 percent interest in a Miami hotel they owned, for $10 million. In addition, Saul and other family members had loans totaling $2.7 million from Continental Illinois Bank, which collapsed in 1984. George Baker, a consultant and former executive at the bank, was on Reliance's board and eventually became the trustee of several family trusts.

It was just the beginning. Over time, Reliance came to be seen as something of a personal piggy bank for the Steinberg family. Anne Steinberg, Saul's mother, got a $934.82 monthly pension from Reliance for life, even though, according to his will, filed in 1978, her husband had never contributed to the pension fund. Robert Steinberg was lent $1.5 million by Reliance when he was getting divorced from his first wife, Kathy, who was the broker on the sale of 740 Park last February. At one point Lynda Jurist got a $400,000 interest-free loan from Reliance. Her husband, Joseph, also benefited from Reliance's largesse. A printing concern he owned was given the company's business every year: the bill usually ran upwards of $150,000, and in 1990 Jurist's company was paid $614,000.

In 1991, when Saul's son Jonathan took his company, then called Financial Data Systems, public, Reliance bought $1 million of its stock, even though it was considered a highly speculative investment. That amounted to one-fourth of Reliance's profits for the first half of 1991, which were wiped out in the third quarter. That year

liance also spent $104,000 refurbishing condominium that was used only by the inberg family.

There were other perks. The corporate , a five-bedroom Boeing 727 with its n silver and crystal and $9,000 cash-re blankets, was heavily used by the inberg family. A real-estate partnership, liance Figueroa, in which Saul and Rob- were the biggest limited partners, ap-ars to have been financed largely, if not irely, by Reliance, which took all the ses but only 48 percent of the profits. nen in 1997 Figueroa appeared to have faulted on several million dol-s of loans, Reliance apparently ked up the tab, to the tune of me $40.6 million that is still ed, according to a real-estate in-stor who studied Reliance's cor-rate filings, which leave key ormation undisclosed.

In 1986, Steinberg took Reliance blic again, at $10 a share. The ue of the Steinberg family's ke in Reliance rose to $580 llion, five times what it had en worth when the company nt private. Within a year and a lf, notes the insurance analyst vid Schiff, the stock had plum-ted by about 50 percent. Not til 1997, Schiff adds, did the ck hit the $10 mark again.

In 1990, Steinberg was sued by shareholder who claimed that family had taken $100 million t of Reliance in dividends, sal-es, and perks while private. e suit also alleged that Saul d deliberately delayed taking ovisions for losses during that ne, thereby inflating profits, un- after he sold the stock to the blic. Reliance settled the suit. cording to some critics' esti-ates, Reliance profits were de-ted by $593 million between 1988 and 92 because of what had happened while company was private. By 1992, Re-nce was also one of the most heavily in-bted insurance companies in America, gely, says Schiff, because of the 1982 eraged buyout. Despite its problems, Re-nce continued to pay a significant divi-nd, which in 1990 put more than $20 llion a year in the pockets of the Stein-rgs, approximately $14.5 million of it in ul's. It also continued to dole out huge mpensation packages to Saul and Robert.

Shortly before the July 4 holiday in 1995, Saul Steinberg, then 55, suffered a stroke. mazingly, Reliance did not inform the blic of this, and after the news was broken out six weeks later by CNBC, company executives insisted that it was not serious. It was, in fact, very serious. For several days his family wasn't sure he would live; his left side was paralyzed. Even now he walks with a halting gait and has some trouble speaking. "It was very bad, awful," says one friend. "Gayfryd was caring for him around the clock at first." For some time, says a man who worked with Steinberg, "he was totally sidelined. He couldn't move his hand. He was very emotional." Even when he recovered, he was no longer able to work a full day.

Overnight the Steinbergs' life changed.



GOLDEN GOOSE

Robert and Saul Steinberg, 1987. In addition to their multimillion-dollar compensation packages, the brothers borrowed in excess of $55 million from the Reliance Group in the mid-80s.

They cut back on parties, hardly going out. Through it all, friends say, Gayfryd was "amazing." "She is true-blue," says one friend. "There she is—he's very fragile and she gets him his special shoes and sets up his little gym. She's truly brave. She never complains." Says one woman, "I go to Sette Mezzo [a fashionable Lexington Avenue restaurant] and occasionally see Saul and Gayfryd there. She fusses over him, buttons his jacket, wraps his scarf around him. He hobbles along, sort of dragging one leg, and she is always holding him under the arm."

After the stroke, Robert Steinberg took charge of the insurance operations of Reliance, and business went on as usual for a while. By this time the family owned just under 50 percent of the company. According to Saul's supporters, in 1993 he had begun to try to strengthen Reliance. He had refinanced its huge debt, issued equity, and strengthened Reliance's board. Far from signaling a reformed Saul, these moves, says one man who worked with him, were necessary because "the market at that time was getting tired of Reliance being a private financing vehicle for the Steinbergs."

In any case, by 1998, it seemed as though these efforts had paid off. Reliance made $326 million that year, up $97 million from the year before. Its debt was down to about 40 percent of capital, from nearly 80 percent in the early 90s. But some things had not changed. Saul, who received approximately $11.6 million in dividends that year, was paid $8.5 million, which included a bonus of 300 percent of his salary. Robert, whose dividend take was around $3.8 million, was paid $8.1 million, which also included a bonus that was three times his salary.

Barely six months later, Reliance was in serious trouble. Its involvement in a re-insurance scheme with Unicover, an underwriting manager, had turned sour and would end up costing Reliance some $170 million. Problems were beginning to show up in several divisions, forcing the company to increase its reserves dramatically.

On top of this, Reliance was burdened with enormous annual interest payments—roughly $62 million—and some $700 million of debt that was coming due in 2000. "If the debt had been due five years from now, they may have had a chance to work out their problems," says James Auden, a senior director at Fitch, the bond-rating service. Steinberg could have eased the pressure by increasing the company's equity, but that would have diluted his family's control. In the end, it was the debt—more than underwriting control problems at Reliance or weakness in the insurance industry—that brought the company to its knees.

Hoping to re-capitalize Reliance in the summer of 1999, Steinberg hired two investment banks, Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette and Bear Stearns. By the fall, however, it was clear the market would not accept any more Reliance debt. Steinberg then hit on a

plan to do an I.P.O. of shares in Reliance's best unit, Reliance Surety. That also failed. In November, with Saul's backing, Reliance's board effectively fired his brother, Robert, removing him as president of the company but allowing him to remain as vice-chairman. By this time the situation was desperate, and Steinberg agreed with advisers who recommended that his company be sold.

Throughout November and December of 1999, competitors scoured Reliance's books. Many wanted to buy pieces—which they have been doing during the last five months in what has amounted to a fire sale—but no one wanted the whole thing. It was the beginning of the end. On February 29—just days after Steinberg sold his apartment—Reliance Group Holdings reported a loss of $311 million. The company also said that it had eliminated its dividend. Although Steinberg would retain the title of chairman, he would be replaced as C.E.O. by George Baker. Steinberg, the company also said, would be paid his salary of $2.15 million, but would get no bonus. In late May, when the insurer Leucadia National announced that it planned to buy Reliance, it seemed the Steinbergs had found a savior. But those hopes were dashed when Leucadia backed out in mid-July.

Late in the afternoon of November 14, Reliance announced it had lost $546.5 million in the third quarter. The next day it was reported that Carl Icahn had bought one quarter of Reliance's overdue bank debt, a development that could complicate Reliance's negotiations with its creditors. Its insurance operations under close scrutiny by regulators, Reliance, says David Schiff, "is basically in a run-off mode."

During the last few months, the Steinbergs' close friends have, publicly at least, been spreading the word that the couple is far from broke; with the problems at Reliance, Gayfryd and Saul have merely been cutting back a bit on their expenses. But privately the friends say that the Steinbergs' financial problems are serious. Saul, they say, did not just lose his salary and income from Reliance's dividends. He was also heavily in debt personally. For years he and Gayfryd had lived "way beyond their means," says one friend. They had borrowed millions of dollars, in many cases using their Reliance stock as collateral. As Reliance's shares began to plummet—selling for 4.7 cents in mid-November, against nearly $20 in 1998—the banks began to demand their money.

In September 1999, for example, Steinberg pledged 8.7 million shares of Reliance, worth some $35 million then, as collateral for a $5 million loan from Provident Bank in Cincinnati. As of last June, another eight million shares of Steinberg's stock had been given as collateral for a $5 million loan from Bear Stearns, and 6.7 million had been pledged to Smith Barney for a $4 million loan. Together those shares accounted for much of Steinberg's Reliance holdings.

Steinberg was also borrowing against his art collection. In fact, as Reliance's problems worsened, in October 1999, Steinberg appeared to be close to desperate. That month, a New York bank, according to insiders, ended its long-standing relationship with him when it discovered that artwork Steinberg had listed as collateral for loans had been either sold or pledged elsewhere. That same month, Steinberg borrowed from Sotheby's, possibly as much as $10 million, by one art dealer's estimate. The collateral was 21 of his old masters—including the Cavallino that was sold to the National Gallery. Indeed, a source says it was some time before Feigen learned he was selling paintings that were under lien to Sotheby's.

It is impossible to tell just how deeply in debt Steinberg is, or how broke. But what has made things harder for Saul and Gayfryd, friends say, is how Saul's family has treated him since the troubles began. "Saul Steinberg made a lot of money very young, and he had a big family. He decided to make everyone rich, to make all the ships rise. And now look what they're doing to him," says one friend angrily. When Saul got into financial trouble, so did his sisters, his mother, and his brother, and in the last few months, says a friend, instead of pulling together, family members have turned on one another. Today, people say that Robert and Saul have ended up on the same side of a family feud against their sisters and their mother, Anne, who, on September 7, sued her sons to recover the roughly $6.2 million she claims she had lent them over the years and which they refused to repay her.

That Anne would sue her sons came as an enormous shock to friends of the Steinbergs'. Echoing the argument made by Saul and Robert in court documents, a friend insists that the brothers do not owe their mother the money in question. According to court records, Saul and his brother claim the loans were related to a reorganization of family trusts and were not conventional loans, because their mother had agreed that they would be forgiven when she died. Indeed, revealing how bitter feelings are in the Steinberg family today, Robert alleged that his mother used "false and fraudulent representations" to get him to sign a promissory note. Anne, on the other hand, has alleged in court documents that a letter from her submitted to the court by her sons' attorney—suggesting that she would forgive the loans—was phony. A source close to Anne insists that she never intended to forgive these loans. "A nice old Jewish lady is not going to sue her son for nothing. Saul was the pride of her life," says a man who is friendly with one of the Steinberg sisters.

Anne Steinberg appears to be serious about getting her money back, although it is unclear if her sons can pay her. In October a judge granted her motion to attach all of Robert's assets in New York—even though his lawyer told the court that Robert's bank might foreclose on his home if this motion was granted. As it is, in February, Robert pledged 4.8 million Reliance shares to M&T Bank for a loan that public filings put at $7 million, an amount Steinberg disputes. In June, according to filings, he pledged nearly everything in his possession in another arrangement with the bank, although he denies he took out a second loan.

As the Steinberg family battles it out, the sell-off continues. Just weeks ago, Saul and Gayfryd quietly put their beloved Quogue estate on the market with a reported asking price of $16 million. Gayfryd, friends say, has been trying to get Saul to face the truth about what has happened to him. She has, says one woman, the only person who can be blunt with him about how bad things are. In fact, his spending has worried Gayfryd for several years, friends now claim. "Especially after the stroke," says a friend, "it was Gayfryd who tried to put some limits on what Saul spent. People say all the extravagance was her idea. It was not. Gayfryd's style is not so grandiose. That was Gayfryd trying to please Saul."

In September, Gayfryd went off to Venice with her friends Carolyne Roehm, the ex-wife of Henry Kravis, and Katherine Bryan, the estranged wife of telecommunications mogul Shelby Bryan. The "three wives club," as one socialite calls them, was spotted on the terrace of the Gritti Palace Hotel, deep in conversation. Upon their return, Gayfryd and her friends announced the formation of a new business enterprise, Away Home & Co. It will specialize in tabletop products, including dishes, flatware, and *décorations de table.* It appears that Gayfryd at least still has her gilded memories: the receptions for 150, the intimate dinners for 50, all that fabulous porcelain, silver, and crystal—and she's going to make them work for her.

"Gayfryd is a very strong, resilient woman," a friend says. "She will adjust. I don't know if Saul will." □

atherine Zeta-Jones

TINUED FROM PAGE 88 wearing a formfit- charcoal-colored wrap sweater and a ncil-slim skirt; her long, slender legs are ed, and her feet are tucked into beaded di shoes, backless atop stiletto heels. ("You 't walk in those," I protest later as we head for lunch at her favorite haunt, Shun Lee st, which is several blocks away. "Who's go- to walk?" Zeta-Jones replies calmly. "Maybe steps?" She smiles and points to the curb, re a chauffeured Lincoln Town Car awaits.)

Although she calls Dylan's birth "probably the best day of my life," Zeta-Jones isn't sting any time in getting back to work; af- a couple of months of breast-feeding, she aned the baby ("You're just a milking ma- ne; you're exhausted!") and started looking ard new challenges. This winter will be nt filming *America's Sweethearts* with Julia berts and John Cusack, and it seems an metaphor for her meteoric rise that Zeta- es gets to play the famous movie star, with berts relegated to the role of the sister who ves as her assistant.

"I relish the fact that Michael and I have d this time together, but I'm ready to rk," Zeta-Jones says. "My work in *Traffic* opened up a different sort of work for , and I'm ready to go out there and do re stuff."

Soderbergh had no idea she was pregnant en he first offered her the role of Helena, a "from the wrong side of somewhere" who ws her way up to become a pampered ntry-club wife—until her husband is arrest- for drug trafficking. Helena, who thought was a respectable businessman, is stunned learn where their money really comes m, but when her life is destroyed she real- s she will go to any length to get it back.

"We never thought of anyone else for the t," Soderbergh says. "From the get-go, we t saying, 'Catherine Zeta-Jones would be rfect for this.' I felt there was a strength ut her, a steeliness we really needed to have this character. I thought Catherine, who a self-possession that comes across on- een, might absolutely pull off the darker e of that. Helena has had a hardscrabble bringing and has been very socially ambi- us for herself; there's a ruthlessness that can turned on whenever necessary. At the same e, we needed someone with star quality."

When Zeta-Jones confessed she was preg- nt and suggested the filmmakers write it o the script, Soderbergh agreed that it ght be an unexpected bonus, lending He- a a vulnerability she could otherwise have ked. "It upped the emotional ante in a way u couldn't have gotten away with if she sn't really pregnant, in which case it uld have seemed like an obvious conceit to prey on your sympathies that way," observes Soderbergh, who was delighted with the results. "I was so impressed with Catherine's performance, which was very naturalistic, very non-actory, very much in keeping with the rest of the film. She knew exactly how to pitch it. She has really good instincts."

Although Zeta-Jones has also been successful playing wholesome, milk-fed types, she can readily project an edge that intrigues directors as well as audiences, who are never quite sure what she's capable of. "There's a kind of danger to a woman like Catherine, and that kind of danger is very attractive to men," says Jan de Bont, who directed her in *The Haunting*. "She is definitely not an innocent. She's not really her age; she's had too much life experience."

"She reminds me of Howard Hawks's women," says Martin Campbell, the director of *Zorro*. "She's a Slim Hawks, Lauren-Bacall-with-Bogart kind of woman, single-minded and funny and tough."

In *Entrapment*, Zeta-Jones played an insurance investigator who sets out to catch a master art thief, but the truth turns out to be far more complicated. "Her character is incredibly cunning, inventive, and manipulative," says Jon Amiel, the director. "She's a girl with a plan, and she executes it with consummate single-mindedness. I think Catherine is not dissimilar. When she was a young girl watching the Academy Awards, she promised her mother that one day her mum would see her up there, and she has worked her way toward that goal with incredible determination."

She also knows how to use her sexuality. "She's not afraid to do the American star thing, which is terrific; that's what show business is all about," says Sir Anthony Hopkins. "She goes for it; she's beautiful, and she's not like those people who want to cover it up. She presents the kind of glamour that's sorely missing these days."

In that way, Zeta-Jones seems particularly different from a lot of her peers. "Unlike so many of our contemporary stars, who seem to be contorted to the point of spasticity about fame and stardom and their own sexuality, Catherine burst upon everyone's consciousness as a full-fledged film star," says Amiel. "She knows what she's got; she knows what she's worth. She's proud of her femininity, and I think she is one of the first actresses since the days of Elizabeth Taylor and Lana Turner and Ava Gardner to bring that full-blown, luscious, ripe-rose sexuality to the screen—which is why the impact she's made has been so significant. Nobody else is doing it. They're all boy-girls—angular, gawky gamines who hide their breasts and who ultimately are in flight from their own sexuality on-screen. Sharon Stone carved out a niche as the kind of femme fatale who is a sexually manipulative schemer, but Catherine brings a warmth to it, a naturalness, and a kind of exuberant enjoyment of it. I don't think Catherine brings the ice-pick-under-the-bed of it all to the screen."

Besides, who needs an ice pick when you have Zeta-Jones's natural assets? She regards them with humorous self-deprecation, complaining about her "piggy nose" (it's upturned but not in the least piggy) and "puffy eyes" (which aren't puffy but do possess an undeniably exotic slant). But men don't appear to register any flaws.

"It always seemed to me that there's a girl you meet when you're about 20 that teaches you a lot of things, and it takes you 15 years to recover," says Stephen Frears, who cast Zeta-Jones as just such a character in *High Fidelity*. "With a girl like that, you wouldn't have a chance."

He himself had seen a photograph of Zeta-Jones back when she first became a star in Britain, and it made such an impact on him that he chose her for *High Fidelity* years later without even knowing her. "She was everything I could have wished," he says, sounding wistful.

Jan de Bont had a similar reaction. "Catherine is one of those women you instantly fall in love with and have to work with," he says. "She has something Brigitte Bardot had when she was young. It's more than just sex appeal. She has the kind of charisma you have to have to be a movie star, where you can't take your eyes away from her. And it's rare—you've either got it or you don't."

Even before Zeta-Jones developed the statuesque body of the classic showgirl, she understood precisely what she had to offer. "My brothers say to me, 'Catherine, you always knew what you wanted to do; you're so lucky!'" says Zeta-Jones, who grew up in Dylan Thomas's hometown. "I knew from a very early age that I wanted to be onstage. There was a church hall behind our house that did dancing lessons, and I started at four. As a child, it's 'I want to be the center of attention!' I did lots of tap-dancing competitions, singing—I always came away with the gold medal."

And it was all her idea. "My mum and dad supported her, but they never pushed her," says Catherine's older brother, David, who is vice president of creative affairs at Initial Entertainment Group, a film-production and international-distribution company. "Catherine had this passion, and her drive came from within. Her chance came when she was very young, and she took it. Even in the theater, if she didn't get the starring role, it was only a couple of months before she did. She would steal the show, so to speak."

By the time she was 11, Zeta-Jones had made it to London, joining the cast of *Annie* in the West End; at 14 she was doing *Bugsy Malone*, and the following year she toured for nine months in *The Pajama Game*. Her big

break came at 16, when she landed the role of second understudy in *42nd Street.* In classic star-is-born fashion, Zeta-Jones went on one night when David Merrick, the producer, happened to be in the audience. "Within two weeks he decided he wanted me to do it," she says. "I just wanted to be a showgirl. I wanted to be onstage hoofing; that was my dream, and tap dancing was my forte—but there I was, sitting opposite David Merrick. I remember being terrified of him. At 16, I had really fulfilled my dream. I thought, Oh my god where do I go now?"

Into television, where the wildly successful British series *The Darling Buds of May* made her a major star, not to mention a major target. "She played a slightly buxom, luscious, lazily voluptuous country girl, and she became a lot of people's fantasy," recalls Jon Amiel. "She oozed this honeyed sexuality, but she also had an incredible wholesomeness and naturalism that had everyone in the palm of her hand."

But as far as the slavering British tabloids were concerned, she was fresh meat. "There was this insatiable appetite for anything on me," Zeta-Jones says. "I'll never forget the feeling of waking up in the morning and my stomach would be churning, and the phone would ring and someone would tell me I was on the front page of something. It got to the point where I was miserable."

"They basically followed her around for two years," says her brother David. "You couldn't pick up a British newspaper without some picture of Catherine."

She eventually fled Britain to start over in Hollywood, where she was cast almost immediately in a television mini-series, *Titanic.* The show was forgettable, but Steven Spielberg happened to channel-surf past it, and was so struck by Zeta-Jones that he suggested her for the part in *Zorro.* "The moment I put her with Banderas, the game was over," says director Martin Campbell. "Quite clearly they had it."

But the horrors of being hounded by the tabloid press shape Zeta-Jones's behavior to this day. Many observers raised an eyebrow when she and Douglas accepted a reported fee of more than $800,000 for selling an interview and pictures of their newborn son to Britain's *OK!* magazine, but Zeta-Jones believed she was purchasing a form of self-protection.

"People say, 'What do you and Michael need the money for?'" she acknowledges. "But if they have an insatiable appetite for pictures of my son, they'll get that picture even if someone gets hurt. When Dylan was two weeks old, I had him in the back of my car, and I was deliberately bumped so I would get out and they could see if I lost weight. We'd have a caravan following us around everywhere. It was just insane. The guy who took the topless photos of me on a boat in Spain got half a million pounds. That's a lot of money, and it shows you to what extremes people will go. After my accident I was so shaken up that when the offer came from *OK!* magazine, I turned to Michael and said, 'This is it. I'm not having anyone go to this extreme to get photos of me and you and Dylan.' Publishing these pictures just takes the edge off the harassment. After this, a picture isn't worth as much. If anyone's going to make money on this, it's Dylan. Part of it will be his trust fund, and half will go to his foundation, so when he comes of age he can decide which causes the money will go to. We've said no presents for the wedding, as well. Instead of wedding gifts, we'd rather have people make a contribution to the Dylan Michael Douglas Fund."

Money has been a sore subject for Zeta-Jones during the last few months, as the tabloids cranked out breathless reports about the allegedly acrimonious negotiations over a pre-nuptial contract. Most reports had Douglas offering $1.4 million for every year of marriage and Zeta-Jones insisting on three times that much, with a compromise agreement reached at $2.8 million. The other issues allegedly included the wedding location and ownership of a house for Zeta-Jones in the event of a divorce. She insists that most of the gossip wasn't true. "There was a load of rubbish written about it, but there was no arguing, no malicious feud," she says wearily. "If I was marrying someone of lesser fortune who was 25 years younger, I'd be doing exactly the same thing. I think pre-nups are brilliant, because it's all sorted out. Why should Michael be in a position where half of his fortune, which he's worked bloody hard for, should land in someone else's lap? It wasn't a nasty experience for me; it was like, 'Thank God that's done—let's get on with it!' It was signed and put in the bottom of a drawer, hopefully never to be seen again. I get taken care of very well."

She sighs, sounding uncharacteristically forlorn. "But it's kind of weird," she admits. "The thing that really upset me was the idea that I was this gold digger. But there are gold-digging women out there, and in a divorce everyone turns green and it's 'Sue the bastard!' Money can create such animosity. But I'm very lucky; I have my own money. I'm self-sufficient, and I think it's good for our relationship. I've never had a cent from any guy, and I'm very proud of that. And Michael has taught me that I have to take care of my own finances; he's the first person to say, 'You make sure you know where every cent is.' I'm very lucky to have my father looking after my finances. No one's ripping me off."

Before he could marry Zeta-Jones, Douglas had to reportedly cough up more than $60 million to win his divorce from Diandra Douglas, the mother of his 22-year-old son, Cameron, who works as a D.J. and li with Jennifer Gatien, the daughter of the famous nightclub entrepreneur Peter Gati "He's had lots of troubles in his teena years, but he's doing great," says Zeta-Jon of her stepson, who has struggled with su stance abuse in the past.

She is equally diplomatic about Micha 23-year marriage to Diandra, whom she h never met. "I think they both tried to mak work, and then he just couldn't do it a more. But it wasn't something he took lightl she says. Although Douglas's first marria was frequently tabloid fodder, he denies so of the more lurid stories, including his alleg treatment for sex addiction. (He says he w into rehab only for alcohol abuse.)

But at times Zeta-Jones's self-descriptio seem to draw an implicit contrast with h predecessor, who was most renowned for h style in dressing and decorating. "I'm not person who's sitting there when he com home at night, saying, 'O.K., entertain me want a new Versace dress; let's go out a have dinner,'" Zeta-Jones says. "If he com home tired from shooting, I absolutely und stand that. I'll say, 'Let's stay home.'"

And in those homes, she is happy to the beneficiary of the former Mrs. Dougla taste. In addition to apartments in New Yo and Los Angeles and the Majorca esta Michael has Wildcat Ranch, a 2,000-ac spread in Aspen. But when he told Ze Jones, "If you want, you can re-decorate she replied serenely, "I don't do houses."

"Michael said, 'Thank God!'" she r ports. "I'm not the kind of person who w ries about which couch goes with this that. I don't really care. I don't have to ma my stamp with material things. She did great job, and I'm very happy with all the beautiful houses."

Zeta-Jones has shown an equal deftness fitting into Douglas's complex lifesty "He's a ball-breaker—the amount of stuff h able to juggle in a day!" she exclaims. "I sa to him yesterday, 'Do you ever get ove whelmed?' He said, 'Just keep writing tho lists, darling, and keep ticking them off.' H brilliant like that. The way he can juggle K Annan on one line and Curtis Hanson on a other and Richard Holbrooke on a third, a Jann Wenner and Yoko Ono asking you to something—it blows my mind sometimes, t cross section of people. He's able to ha friends in all walks of life."

Sex addict or not, Douglas was certain a notorious womanizer who had his pick many celebrated women, but when Zet Jones came along he was putty in h hands. "I went, 'Wow!'" he admits. "I real had not seen an actress who just came up the stage like that since Julie Christie. mean, what's not to like? She had tongue cheek, that little twinkle in her eye, gre

le: she's got a great sense of humor, she's
ght as a tack, she's really talented, she has
at family values and a strong family back-
ound, she has a great work ethic, she's real
ciplined—and obviously she's stunning.
just been a really joyful experience."

But Zeta-Jones believes in the power a
man acquires by making men wait ("My
ther always said, 'Don't show them every-
ng!'"), and for a long time she played him
a violin. "When I first met him it was a
tation dance, which I found very flattering,
I didn't know how much he meant it,"
says. "I didn't want to jump into bed; I
n't want to start something where dis-
ce would make it just a fling."

Badly burned by the lascivious coverage of
love life back in Britain, where she had
n engaged to *Braveheart* actor Angus Mac-
lyen, Zeta-Jones also feared a new round
salacious scorekeeping. "I didn't want Mi-
el Douglas to be part of my list, and I
n't want to be part of his list," she says
didly. "He didn't want to have his teeth
ked in, either. So this scared love dance
t on for nine months. He only got a kiss
the cheek—maybe three times a real kiss."

And yet she was careful to stoke his ardor
h shrewdly calibrated enticements. "We'd
on a date and he'd say, 'O.K., I'm wasting
time'—but then there would be one little
g that kept the fire burning, and he'd
ne back for more," she says. Knowing about his passion for golf, she dropped that into the conversation at a crucial moment, just as she was leaving on yet another trip: "By the way, I do play golf," she says, mimicking her own coquettishness. "He was like, 'She plays GOLF? Thank you, God!'"

And then, in June of 1998, they met up in Majorca, "and that was it," says Zeta-Jones. "We realized this was serious."

Last New Year's Eve, despite the fact that they both had the flu, Douglas went down on one knee. "We both were honking and blowing our noses; I had snot dribbling down my face," Zeta-Jones says. When her lover presented the eye-popping ring, a 1920s platinum number featuring a marquise-cut 10-carat diamond surrounded by pavé diamonds, she said, "Oh my God—are you crazy?" And then, after accepting his proposal, "I'm exhausted—let's go back to bed!"

Although Diandra was said to be out of town, Cameron Douglas served as best man at the wedding, which featured heavy security—not only to protect the assembled stars, but also to ensure that no one took any unauthorized pictures. Ever alert to lucrative opportunities, the bride and groom had sold exclusive photo rights to *O.K.!* magazine for a reported $1.5 million.

While the wedding went smoothly, Zeta-Jones knows that the true challenge is just beginning. "It's a real long road, a relationship," she says. "We all get into a routine, and you can lose the spark; I am very aware of that. When you have a baby, I think a lot of men say, 'I don't get enough attention anymore.' It's nice to keep the mystique, keep it alive. Surprise is nice."

Douglas has no problem with her going back to work so soon: "He's genuinely proud of me," says Zeta-Jones. "There's not one ounce of animosity about a career that could be blossoming."

Douglas understands that this is her moment. "She's smart enough to know that it's time to kick some butt here," he says.

Which Zeta-Jones has every intention of doing. "The harder I work, the luckier I get," she says dryly.

But she recognizes how fortunate she has been. "I do think I'm lucky I met Michael. Not just Michael Douglas the actor and producer with two Oscars on the shelf, but Michael Douglas the love of my life," she says. "I really do think it was meant to happen."

Zeta-Jones looks around at her sumptuous apartment, where servants come and go noiselessly and a beaming nanny whisks the baby off for a stroll in the park before his mommy even has to ask. "I'm surprised sometimes by how much I fit in here," she says, seeming bemused for a moment. "The kid from Wales . . . "

Then a sly grin steals across her face. "At least I know which forks to use when I'm at the U.N." □

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ill Clinton

NTINUED FROM PAGE 98 by his friends, as
is enemies knew what was really in his
rt and what he longed to get away with,
nly he had the chance.

linton's enduring personal popularity at
the end of his term defies traditional po-
al analysis. His presidency was, if noth-
else, exceptional theater. The political
l the personal (indeed the *very personal*)
n seemed to be blended seamlessly. The
ite House story line sometimes appeared
e scripted by a writer from the soaps.
ry major vote was a cliff-hanger. He was
is best—and most dangerous—when his
k was to the wall. No one ever did em-
hy, real empathy and artificial empathy,
ter. Under Clinton we may have been ex-
sted, but we were never bored.

What the American people had with him,
ink, was in the end a deal.

He intrigued them, charmed them, ir-
ted them, and, on occasion, angered
m, but he did not fool them. He was
, as he sometimes seemed to believe,
arter than they were and therefore able
get away with whatever he wanted. They were on to him, I think, starting early in the relationship, as knowing about him as he was about them. Clinton might be imperfect, voters figured, but they knew what they were getting, and they suspected the alternatives were a good deal worse. He fooled them only when they wanted to be fooled.

The American people—it was part of the deal—did not care that deeply about the state of his marriage; if they suspected that there was a certain promiscuity there, they believed it was not their business. They probably would have preferred to be able to trust him a bit more, but they had other things on their minds. The country was being run reasonably well, the economy was surging, and he seemed on domestic matters to be working the center and to have surrounded himself with talented, modern people. He seemed to have perfect pitch for the mood of the country.

If there were inconsistencies and contradictions to him as a man and as a politician, they were not that different from those of many of the people his own age who voted for him: the gap in his curriculum vitae on Vietnam was not that different from theirs. For some of the older people, where the cultural and political gap was a little wider, there was a belief that he got the job done and that, in addition, a good deal of the criticism leveled against him was simply unfair, that it had a quality which was unacceptably personal.

The American people had become, however involuntarily, a great deal shrewder about politicians and their personal lives in the almost 40 years of the marriage of national politics to national television. In that time, for example, the Kennedy family, regarded in the earlier and more innocent days of televised politics as the ultimate in romantic politics—all those good-looking, wealthy people who seemed to marry other good-looking, wealthy people—had been dipped in ex post facto smut. The booming celebrity-scandal industry in both print media and television had gradually desensitized the voters. They had become skeptical of both those seeking the presidency—or any other high office—and those in the media doing the judging. Was it a great surprise that Newt Gingrich and some of his moralistic colleagues in the Congress were soon shown to be leaders whose morality was greater in theory than in practice, men who were casting stones while forgetting that they too lived in the same glass house? Did the American people think that the great and powerful figures of the media, who devoured so self-righteously and amplified so enthusiastically the scandal in the

Bill Clinton

White House, were free from sexual escapades themselves? Not likely.

Ordinary voters now understood in some intuitive way that the overwhelming ego which created the need to run for the presidency—was it a glandular condition?—and which caused a man to reject the rewards of a normal life, often had a downside as well. They shrewdly sensed that sexual excess was often the flip side of such an ego.

As he leaves office, we are left with a certain awe of Clinton's gifts and a certain wistfulness about the uses to which they were put.

His natural political talents were simply dazzling. When he was first elected, I thought he represented a rare combination of the better parts of John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson—the intellectual ability and intuitive capacity to sense historical trends that distinguished Kennedy, and Johnson's physical energy and his ability to lever the political processes. Now, as I reflect on the Clinton era and the odds he overcame, I am inclined to think he had even more talent than that, that he may be, in the words of Clinton enthusiast James Carville, the best horse I've ever seen.

Because of the conservatism of the country, and the odds against him, it is surprisingly hard to estimate his achievements, other than winning twice and surviving again and again. He wrestled early on in his first administration with immense budget deficits left by his predecessors, and he said of his early policies, accurately enough, that he had become an Eisenhower Republican. His interest in foreign policy was for a very long time sporadic—his administration was driven from the start by the campaign phrase "It's the economy, stupid." Only late in his career—after the Lewinsky scandal and as he was increasingly in search of some sort of legacy—did he become more involved in foreign policy. How much risk Clinton was willing to take on in order to defend any policy decision was always in question; sometimes it seemed that he was so closely connected to the country that his greate capacity was to feel what the country fe rather than to lead it.

Bill Clinton stood tall on a small lan scape; as he leaves, his popularity tops staggering 60 percent. But that raises t question of whether it's a good thing to lea office so popular. Harry Truman was n afraid to take the heat for a cause he b lieved in, and he left office at the nadir his popularity; his high standing with histo ans is largely posthumous.

Of Clinton's years, it can be said that generally resisted the angriest and least ge erous forces in the nation, that he smooth America's way into the global economy, a that in time the American economy explo ed. Some of the credit for this last is his, having taken on the deficit in the ear months of his administration. The Dow eve tually went up a miraculous 7,000 poin but America does not treasure its leade for what they do for the Dow. The tru may be all too poignant: Bill Clinton can to us full of promise, and he leaves us fu of promise. □

Christopher Rockefeller

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 94 trapped. Every time he looked out, he saw the men under the streetlight. Nearly an hour later, now thoroughly soaked, McCrary looked out and saw that the coast was clear. By then it was almost two. McCrary resolved to give the inn one more try; if he could just get Rockefeller's license-plate number, he was certain the detectives would find an excuse to pull him over.

He crept back to the parking lot and, seeing no one nearby, soon spotted Rockefeller's Mazda. Now what? What good would a license-plate number do, after all? He tried the car door and to his surprise it was unlocked. He slid inside, opened the glove box, and found a sheaf of papers identifying the car as a Hertz rental from Newark Airport. His mind raced. What could he do to get Rockefeller arrested? He thought of the bar up the road. Maybe he could go buy some drugs and plant them in the Mazda. Too dramatic, he finally decided, not to mention illegal. After jotting down the license-plate number, he gave up, trudged back to his car, and began driving home to Water Mill.

Two miles down the road he turned around and headed back to the Mill-Garth. He had to do something. Back in the inn's parking lot, McCrary squatted down in front of the Mazda, unscrewed the license plate, and threw it into the bushes. Maybe if the car was missing a license plate, he thought, the police would pull Rockefeller over on a traffic warrant. No sooner had he cast the plate aside, however, than he realized how far-fetched his plan was. Rockefeller would just replace the plate.

McCrary waded into the bushes, retrieved the plate, and laboriously screwed it back into place. Then he removed some screws. Maybe the plate would come loose, he thought, forcing the police to pull the car over. McCrary stood and surveyed his handiwork, satisfied. Now all he needed was for the police to do their jobs.

And so the dashing old-money heir tracked the master criminal to his lair . . . er, his bed-and-breakfast. Yet something was missing. Even though McCrary had found where the con man lived, even though Pagan's guests had carried off their real-life parlor game, none of them had the first clue who "Christopher Rockefeller" really was.

A continent away, in sunny Southern California, George Mueller knew, or thought he knew. Mueller, a chiseled, broad-shouldered cop fond of blinding-white dress shirts, is a supervising investigator with the district attorney's Bureau of Investigation in Los Angeles. In his tiny unmarked office beside an elevator shaft in the L.A. County Criminal Courts Building, he kept boxes of the con man's papers, the product of a 1997 search warrant. Mueller knew "Christopher Rockefeller" by several names, including Christopher Reyes, Christopher Lloyd, and the name on his passport, Christopher Rocancourt. His investigation of Rocancourt's activities in L.A. between 1996 and 1999 had generated enough evidence to yield scores indictments.

Even Mueller got confused sorting throug it all. Bribery of federal passport officials. diamond-smuggling scheme in Zaire. A alleged perfume fraud involving Micha Jackson's brother Jermaine. An estimate quarter-million dollars conned out of an I nian clothes merchant. Another half-millio or so swindled from a French singer. Abo ed attempts to buy a $9 million mansion, private jet, and a Bentley. Tens of thousan of dollars in unpaid hotel bills. Not to me tion a shooting at an intersection in We Hollywood involving Dodi Fayed's Hun mer. Oh, and the dead body. And the han grenades in the space heater.

When Mueller first crossed his trail May 1997, the mysterious Mr. Roca court had been living in Suite 1090 at th Regent Beverly Wilshire hotel for s months. He was chatty and brash, a litt arrogant. With his heavy French accen and bedroom eyes, women adored him. Y no one seemed to know who he was. T some he was Christopher De Laurentii nephew of the filmmaker Dino De Laure tiis, or Christopher de la Renta, nephew designer Oscar de la Renta. To others h was Christopher Reyes, Pia Reyes being th name of his wife, a former *Playboy* Play mate (Miss November 1988). With still oth ers he went by Christopher Rocancour He drove a gray Ferrari—wife Pia had Jaguar—and cruised the streets of Beverl Hills wearing Armani and Versace. He sai

was part owner of two Beverly Hills bou-
es, Iceberg and Sir Oliver.
Through Suite 1090 marched a parade of
. oddballs, fringe dwellers, and wanna-
, even the odd movie star and an actual
-abiding citizen or two, most of whom
ancourt befriended at nightclubs, bistros,
fashionable boutiques. His bodyguard
ny Amghar was a beefy Algerian who
onlighted as a security man for Anna
ole Smith. Lea Bongo was Jermaine Jack-
's assistant and lived at the singer's
se; she said she was an African princess,
posedly talked up the Zairean diamond-
ggling scheme, and introduced Rocan-
rt to a motley collection of supposed
ican royals, one of whom lent Rocan-
rt another Ferrari. Carlos Pinho was a
erly Hills police officer who apparently
ed the crowd after stopping Rocancourt
speeding. Rocancourt's pal Charles
nn was a fast-talking French expatriate in
60s who claimed to have once been a
or Paris fashion designer. ("The Nehru
et? That was mine.") They all came to
is and Pia's lavish parties, for which
ancourt kept detailed lists of his guests'
ds. ("Asian girls, drugs . . . " went one.)
As a con man, Rocancourt developed an
O. that was simplicity itself. Masquerad-
as a wealthy French investor, he tried
ut together business deals—almost any
l—and would then walk off with whatev-
noney he could wrest from his investors.
Christopher De Laurentiis, he entered
talks with a group of Yugoslav investors
pen a nightclub in Beverly Hills. Finan-
documents that later fell into the hands
police show Rocancourt was due a pay-
nt of $850,000 for his part in the deal,
ch never happened. Not all his schemes
e so grand. A film extra named Buddy
oa gave Rocancourt $15,000 to invest in
stock market; when neither the expected
fits nor the money itself was forthcoming,
oa wrote Rocancourt a plaintive letter,
ging for its return.

here was nothing Rocancourt wouldn't
try, and failure seemed only to embold-
him. In December 1996 he entered into
otiations to buy a $21.1 million private
lfstream jet; the talks apparently col-
ed when Rocancourt couldn't come up
a down payment. He had a Bentley de-
ed to the Regent Beverly Wilshire, but
driver returned to the dealership with it
n Rocancourt couldn't pay. He took two
tings with Brian Adler, developer of the
erly Park section of Beverly Hills, in an
mpt to buy a $9.5 million Italianate man-
he had seen advertised. Over drinks at
Polo Lounge at the Beverly Hills Hotel,
ancourt told Adler he was a French heir
sting his father's demands that he attend
rvard Law School.

"Quite frankly, he was almost impossible to have a conversation with because his accent was so thick," Adler remembers. "He could barely speak English." Adler endured one more meeting at his home with Rocancourt, who brought along Pia, before dismissing the muscled young Gaul as a fake.

Despite Rocancourt's rough edges, not everyone was so circumspect. His two major benefactors, it appears, were Michel Polnareff, an aging French pop singer, and Shahram Moussazadeh, the owner of the two clothing boutiques Rocancourt claimed to own. Neither man will comment, but George Mueller estimates their losses to Rocancourt at more than $250,000 apiece. Rocancourt met Polnareff one evening at L.A.'s Cafe Maurice, and a friendship blossomed when the con man promised to obtain a gun permit Polnareff was seeking. Authorities estimate the singer forked over several hundred thousand dollars. According to documents later found in Rocancourt's possession, Moussazadeh was nearly as generous. Mueller uncovered a handwritten list of items Moussazadeh gave or lent to Rocancourt, including more than $200,000 in cash, $25,000 in clothes, and the gray Ferrari Rocancourt drove. Yet Mueller got nowhere when he tried to question Moussazadeh about their relationship. "That guy wouldn't tell us a thing," says Mueller.

Moussazadeh was the fulcrum for two of Rocancourt's more ambitious schemes. In late 1996, when Rocancourt met Jermaine Jackson and his assistant Lea Bongo in a Beverly Hills boutique, he invited the pair back to his suite. Afterward the con man brokered a deal in which Jermaine, on behalf of his brother Michael, agreed to allow Moussazadeh to market a string of perfumes based on Michael's best-selling songs; the scents would be named Thriller, Bad, and so on. Jermaine, who declines all comment on Rocancourt, ultimately backed out of the deal. Other than a signed photo of the singer, it's unclear what if anything Rocancourt got out of it.

Another venture, however, proved far more profitable, at least for the con man. Together Rocancourt and Moussazadeh entered into an agreement with the Regent Beverly Wilshire to open an Italian men's clothing boutique called Pal Zileri at the hotel. The store never opened, but it did give Rocancourt an opportunity to solicit prospective investors. The scheme drew the interest of one of Rocancourt's newest friends, Carlos Pinho's sister Lillian, a tough-talking redhead in her 40s who owned a small business that processed mail for larger companies. Lillian Pinho met Rocancourt the night he drove up to the Beverly Hills Police Department's Black and White Ball in his gray Ferrari. She was soon a fixture at Rocancourt's hotel suite and grew close to Pia, whom she helped through the birth of their son, Zeus, in the spring of '97. She gave Rocancourt more than $125,000 to invest in the Pal Zileri store, only to have second thoughts once he began pressing her for information on her own firm.

"He had lots and lots of questions: how much money my business had, which accounts I used, the account numbers," she recalls. "He said, 'I can help you triple and double what's in there. . . .' [At one point] he said, 'If I gave you money, how could you legitimize it?' . . . It got to the point where I said, 'Wait a second, this is not the way I want to conduct my business.' [He said,] 'Don't worry, don't worry.' This is when I started to draw back."

Pinho wasn't the only one having doubts about Rocancourt that spring. His bodyguard Benny Amghar, already irritated by Rocancourt's failure to secure him a promised green card, grew alarmed after the con man allowed him to stay in Pia's old apartment on Maple Drive. Strewn throughout was rack upon rack of Versace suits, the price tags still attached. Rocancourt had warned him not to try using the broken wall heater, but one night it grew so cold Amghar opened the heater's front cover to turn it on. Out tumbled a brown paper bag holding a pistol. He spied several other bags inside, all apparently containing handguns. And then he found the hand grenades, two of them. Stunned, Amghar searched the rest of the apartment. Behind a curtain he found two long rifles with scopes. He moved out in a hurry.

Amghar's alarm turned to anger when Pia reported that the Versace suits and other clothing he had found in the apartment—valued at $275,000—had been stolen; Rocancourt told the Beverly Hills police he suspected Amghar. Angry and afraid, Amghar then went to the police himself— and told them everything he knew about Rocancourt's schemes. One that piqued George Mueller's curiosity involved federal passport officials. According to Amghar, Rocancourt and Lea Bongo had slipped a $2,000 bribe to two Los Angeles passport clerks to issue Rocancourt an American passport. When Mueller ran Rocancourt's name by the F.B.I. and Interpol, he found they had files on his past exploits. He opened a full-scale investigation.

By this time Rocancourt sensed trouble. He told Lillian Pinho that he thought he might soon be arrested. As Pinho recalls it, "He says, 'You know, my friends from the C.I.A. came by and did a sweep, and I think the heat is coming. I think they bugged the place.' He was so excited. He just loves the attention he gets from being a

criminal. He is absolutely enchanted by it."

By the end of May 1997, Mueller was ready to strike. Armed with a search warrant, he and a half-dozen sheriff's deputies raided Rocancourt's suite. As a stunned Pia looked on, they carted away boxes of personal papers, jewelry, and several guns. But Rocancourt was already gone, off on a "business trip" to the Far East. Within hours of the raid, in fact, he phoned Lillian Pinho from Bangkok. His voice betrayed no sense of alarm. Instead, Pinho recalls, he sounded excited. "He loved it!" she says. "He just loved the attention!" From Bangkok, Rocancourt implored Pinho to bring Pia to meet him in Rome. Pinho realized it was her last chance to get her money back. And so, leaving Zeus with a nanny, she and Pia flew to Rome.

Rocancourt, meanwhile, was enjoying a gilded tour of the Far East. With his old friend Charles Glenn as his aide-de-camp, Rocancourt had flown to Hong Kong, where they stayed at the Four Seasons, then forged on to Macao, two cities in China, Jakarta, and ultimately Bangkok. There, to Glenn's amazement, they were met by a chauffeured limousine and accompanied to their hotel by a police escort.

They continued on to Europe, where Glenn headed to Paris, alone. When Pia and Lillian Pinho arrived in Rome several days later, Rocancourt, clad in Armani, met them at the airport. He was accompanied by an elderly gentleman, Don Miguel de Summa, whom Rocancourt introduced as a mentor and adviser to his father. They all stayed at the luxurious Hotel Hassler, atop the Spanish Steps, hit the best nightclubs every evening, and shopped incessantly. On one such outing, Pinho recalls, Pia confided that her greatest dream in life had always been to marry a criminal. "The one thing you can never, never do," Pinho remembers her saying, "is snitch." Pinho's alarm grew when the group was joined on several evenings by a man named Gianfranco, who, Rocancourt whispered, was a hit man for his father. Pinho began pressing Rocancourt to return her money. He appeared to relent, saying he was sending Don Miguel to Switzerland to retrieve a check for $9 million that was owed to him.

After three weeks Pinho left, saying she needed to get back to her business in Los Angeles. Pia followed a week later, checking back into the Regent Beverly Wilshire. Several days after that, Rocancourt called Pinho from Rome, asking that she meet him at the airport in Vancouver and drive him across the border. She did so, meeting him and Don Miguel and driving them to Seattle, where they all boarded a plane back to Los Angeles. Rocancourt said he would repay her within days from the proceeds of the $9 million check. "I remember in the airport [Rocancourt] went cruising, saying he was going to look 'for surveillance,'" Pinho remembers. "What an ego."

Back in West Hollywood, Rocancourt and his growing entourage shuttled from hotel to hotel, running up huge bills. Pinho continued to seek her money from both Rocancourt and the kindly Don Miguel, whom she had befriended. "Do you have the check?" she kept asking. Finally one day Don Miguel said he did. From inside his necktie he produced a check. Pinho examined it in astonishment.

"It is a blank check, written on someone's account in New York, a brand new account," she recalls. "But it's signed by Steve Martin! The comedian! [I said,] 'This is the check? This is bullshit!'" Don Miguel, carefully slipping the check back into his tie, professed to be scared of Rocancourt. He said he would try to work things out.

The next night Pinho got a call from Don Miguel. He sounded frightened. If she came to the hotel in the morning, he promised, he would explain everything. The next morning Pinho phoned Don Miguel to confirm the appointment. There was no answer. She called every five minutes for an hour; still no answer. Finally she called Rocancourt, who typically slept until noon, on his cell phone.

"Look, something's wrong with Don Miguel," she remembers saying. "You need to go find him. I'm very worried." Pinho listened as Rocancourt, still on his cell phone, walked down the hall to Don Miguel's room. The door was locked. A maid let him in. "Oh my God!" she heard Rocancourt exclaim. "He's dead! Get over here now!"

Pinho, suspecting Don Miguel had been murdered, was at the hotel within minutes. She found his body on his bed. There were no obvious signs of violence, though she noticed the couch was rumpled, its pillows thrown about. Pinho told Rocancourt to call the police, and he did, reluctantly. The next day and twice more on following days, Pinho called the coroner's office. "I told them, 'Look, you need to do an autopsy on this guy, something is wrong here, I think he might have been murdered,'" she recalls. "And they said, 'No no no no, he died of natural causes. A heart attack.'" Though investigators would later inquire into Don Miguel's death, there was never an official murder investigation. The body was cremated.

From there Pinho's relationship with Rocancourt degenerated into a series of angry phone calls. "I kept calling him," she says. "At one point he wrote me a check for 20 or 30 thousand dollars. It bounces.... There were lots of fights on the phone. He kept s ing, 'Don't you be a snitch. You know w will happen to you.' I was like, 'Fuck y Just try it! Come on over, let's go.'"

Pinho's final chapter with Rocanco came with the arrival on her doorstep Gianfranco, the "hit man" she had met Rome. Gianfranco, she says, was actua the owner of a small photocopying sh Rocancourt had taken him for his ent savings, more than $35,000. Gianfran spent several days in Los Angeles fruitle searching for Rocancourt before return to Rome.

By December 1997, when he was fina charged along with Lea Bongo and t others on charges of passport fraud, Roc court was being sought by several gove ment agencies, including the F.B.I. and L.A. County District Attorney's Office, wh Mueller's file on his exploits was growing the minute. But no one in law enforcement alized Rocancourt had slipped back into L

In fact, Rocancourt's strange career h entered its Mickey Rourke Phase. He h befriended the hard-partying actor at a W Hollywood lounge on Sunset Bouleva named Barfly and had moved in with h not long after, hiding in plain sight Rourke's roomy home on a side street abo Sunset. Rourke has declined all comment his friendship with Rocancourt, but the t spent many a night at Barfly, along w Charles Glenn and some new friends, cluding the actor Jean-Claude Van Dam and his then wife, Darcy LaPier. It was uniquely L.A. scene; Van Damme, who sa he has no memory of Rocancourt, was loo ing for financing for a health club he hop to open, and, according to Glenn, had a proached Rocancourt via Van Damme's sistant's chiropractor. Rocancourt, in tu promised Van Damme $40 million to p duce his next movie.

They weren't the only celebrities Roca court sought out. In his address bo he kept private numbers for Dolph Lun gren and Robert De Niro, although ther no evidence he met either actor. He had particular fascination with the late Do Fayed, who before his 1997 death spent tim in L.A. producing several movies. "Chr topher tried to get close to Dodi, but Do never met him," says Fayed's longtime ass tant, Melissa Henning. "One time he p tended to be a buyer and went to Dod house in Malibu. He was like a stalker." ter Fayed's death, Rocancourt managed buy his customized Hummer—it had a su veillance camera mounted in back—throu a car broker. He told friends Fayed had g en it to him.

While Rocancourt was staying with Rour during the winter months of 1997–98, h

tant companion was a Valkyriesque
de "model" named Rhonda Rydell. Ry-
a single mother whose topless photos
be found on several Internet sites, says
net Rocancourt at a pre-production din-
or the World Music Awards in Monaco,
e she hoped to be a spokesmodel. Ro-
ourt attended the dinner as a prospec-
investor and asked for her number. The
night over dinner, he told her he was
ch royalty, the son of a countess, and
grown up in a castle, though he later
e a point of saying he had always
ed hard in the family fields. He flashed
g with the family crest.
After that I was with him every day for
nonths; we spent every second together,"
Rydell. "He was the love of my life. We
d not deny each other. We just connect-
n a really deep, you know, soulful level.
could communicate without speaking."
Rydell, Rocancourt was a world-weary
ler, "a modern-day philosopher, a teacher
e."

o Rourke and their small circle of
friends, Rocancourt and Rydell were
wn as "Bugsy and Virginia," after the
ster Bugsy Siegel and his moll, Virginia
They spent their days sleeping late, go-
to nightclubs, and attending business
tings at their favorite restaurants, Cafe
rice and Drai's, though, Rydell says,
could never understand what was said;
ancourt typically talked business in
ch or Italian. He was, as always, very
l at keeping his true nature a secret.
all the time she spent with him, Rydell
't know that Rocancourt's wife, Pia, and
son were stashed in an apartment just
ks from Rourke's home.
hen that spring Rocancourt's luck
ptly ran out. On the night of March 14,
, he was partying with Rourke, Rydell,
several other friends at the Garden of
n nightclub in Hollywood. Around
night Rocancourt noticed a muscular
with a ponytail, whom he later de-
bed as an "Arab," sitting at a nearby
e, staring at him. Words were exchanged.
ording to testimony later gathered by
police, the Arab stood and began
aming at Rocancourt, "Do you know
I am? I'm going to fucking kill you!"
n Rourke and a trio of the Arab's over-
friends stepped between the two men
re a fight could break out. The Arab's
p then left the club.
Early the next evening Rocancourt, driv-
Dodi Fayed's old Hummer, pulled up
ide Cafe Maurice on La Cienega Boule-
. Just as he arrived, in what appeared to
n awful coincidence, the same group of
bs stepped out of a black Mercedes 500.
ancourt sped off, but the Arabs had seen
and jumped into their Mercedes to give
chase. Speeding south down La Cienega, Rocancourt watched the Hummer's dashboard video monitor as the Mercedes gained on him. Just then Rydell called Rocancourt on his cell phone. He told her he was being followed by a luxury sedan loaded with angry Arabs and to please call the police.

After several minutes Rocancourt was forced to stop at a red light at San Vicente and Santa Monica. The Mercedes pulled up alongside. A white Hyundai pulled up behind, and a man emerged. Listening on the cell phone, Rydell heard gunshots.

Moments later Rocancourt, scared and out of breath, stumbled into a sheriff's department substation across the street. He told the officers he had been shot at. The scene was cordoned off and an investigation begun. There were indeed gunshot holes in the Hummer, but the officers saw they had all been made from inside the vehicle, with a .40-caliber Glock pistol Rocancourt wasn't licensed to carry. Officers found the man from the Hyundai at a local hospital, a minor bullet wound in his arm.

Rocancourt was held for questioning. When sheriff's deputies ran his name through their computer, they found the outstanding warrant for passport fraud. Within an hour of Rocancourt's detainment, both Rydell and Pia appeared at the substation. It was only then, Rydell says, that she realized Rocancourt was married. "I asked him, 'Chris, what is going on?'" she recalls. "At that point, the whole picture started to come clear to me, that he was living a double life."

Despite his protests, Rocancourt was held for trial on the passport-fraud charges, as well as on new charges of carrying a concealed weapon. He was thrown into the L.A. County Jail. "I stayed loyal to him the whole time he was in jail," says Rydell. "We talked eight hours a day the whole time he was incarcerated, close to three months.... He said he wants to write books about our love. Our love, it was a movie." The movie ended, Rydell says, when she broke up with Rocancourt, citing his marriage.

Rocancourt, via Charles Glenn, begged everyone for bail money, from Rourke to Victor Drai of Drai's to other restaurant owners he knew. It was Pia who finally arranged to get Rocancourt released, paying a portion of his $175,000 bail. But all was not well. By late spring 1998, when the con man's trail was picked up by Mitch Seflin, a Sherman Oaks private investigator hired by Michel Polnareff, the French pop singer, it was clear Rocancourt was running scared. Setting up surveillance outside an apartment Rocancourt shared with Pia, Seflin and his men watched as Rocancourt came and went, constantly accompanied by muscular bodyguards—eight of whom appeared at a single court hearing.

During the several weeks of surveillance, Seflin suspects, Rocancourt was engaged in an intricate check-kiting scam with a circle of Vietnamese friends. Then, in July, Seflin received a tip that Rocancourt was poised to jump bail. After a court hearing in downtown Los Angeles, one of Seflin's men followed Rocancourt and his bodyguards back to a nearby parking lot.

"They pulled the old double-limo trick," Seflin sighs. Rocancourt and his bodyguards shuffled back and forth between two rented limousines, until Seflin's man couldn't be certain which one Rocancourt was in. When the two limos drove off, one headed west, the other east, then south. Seflin's man followed the eastbound one, figuring that Rocancourt might be heading for the Mexican border. Which limo the con man took he never found out; a policeman stopped the detective for speeding. Once again, Rocancourt had vanished.

Still no one had figured out who Rocancourt really was.

Christophe Thierry Daniel Rocancourt, it turns out, was born in July 1967, in the scenic resort town of Honfleur on the coast of Normandy. But a visit to Honfleur uncovers no trace of Rocancourt in the town—no relatives, no official documents. The key that unlocks the mystery of Rocancourt's origins lies in the dank cellar of an orphanage in the outlying town of Saint-Germain-Village. There I discover a musty pink-paper file whose contents chronicle the heartbreaking story of a smiling nine-year-old boy, his photographs attached with a paper clip, who was admitted in October 1976.

Rocancourt was the son of a drunken housepainter named Daniel Rocancourt and a 17-year-old prostitute named Annick Villers; the couple married a month before Christophe was born. The family, which soon added a daughter, lived in a mobile home across from a Presbyterian church in the hamlet of Conteville, just over a set of green hills from the mouth of the river Seine and the English Channel. Theirs was a miserable existence, according to the orphanage report; Daniel complained that Annick left the children alone while she was off plying her trade with her sister.

In 1969, not two years after they wed, the couple separated following the death of a second daughter, during childbirth. According to his brothers, who still live nearby, Daniel discovered Annick was cheating on him; he left the family to find work in Belgium. Annick then abandoned Christophe and his infant sister, moving away and leaving them with her parents, the Terrier-Villers, who lived in a two-room hovel without running water or electricity.

By the time Christophe was five his father had returned from Belgium and taken

up with Annick's sister, who two years later abandoned Christophe just as her sister had. When Daniel's next girlfriend also rejected the children, he installed Christophe and his sister in the orphanage in Saint-Germain-Village. A 1979 psychological analysis says Christophe talked endlessly of rejoining his father, but a reunion was not to be; Daniel died in 1991, having keeled over in a snowbank. At the orphanage, Christophe was a bright if desultory student who chafed at authority, bartered the other children's toys, and had at least one run-in with gendarmes. In November 1978 he confessed to vandalizing a local man's home, throwing rocks, bashing in windows, and stealing nuts, pears, and apples. "Whenever he got in trouble, he could charm his way out—always a bit of a talker, you know," recalls his former counselor, Patrick Hnoy.

In July 1979, after almost three years in the orphanage, 12-year-old Rocancourt was adopted by a family who lived outside Le Neubourg, an hour's drive east. His adoptive father was a military man who tried in vain to discipline the restive boy.

"I told Daniel, 'If this was my son, I would never let him go with this man,'" remembers Joel Rocancourt, Daniel's brother and Christophe's uncle. A stout, ruddy-faced laborer, Joel is sipping a glass of pastis with another brother, Germain, at their mother's simple home in Conteville; Adrienna Rocancourt, Christophe's grandmother, is a friendly old woman who shakes her head at news of her grandson's exploits. The military man, Joel goes on, "was tough on Christophe, very mean. I know he tried to run away two, three times from that man.... Then, when he turned 18 [in 1985], he just took off. I remember he told me, 'Uncle, I will come back a big man.'"

Rocancourt fled to the streets of Paris, two hours south. There, amid the neon lights and dizzying spectacle of the French capital, the teenager made the fateful decision not to introduce himself as Christophe Rocancourt, the poor, orphaned first-born of a French prostitute. Instead he constructed and assumed the identity of a wealthy Russian nobleman, Prince de Galitzine. It was, by all accounts, a clumsy ruse that fooled almost no one. Between 1987 and 1992, Rocancourt was jailed five times, for forgery, counterfeiting, and petty larceny.

Then, on the night of September 15, 1991, three armed men broke into the apartment of a woman in Geneva, Switzerland, just across the French border. They held the woman and her companion hostage overnight. Early the next morning the trio took the woman to the jewelry store where she worked and forced her to open the safe. The men grabbed about $400,000 in diamond rings and watches and leapt into their waiting car. Police gave chase, and the men were forced to escape on foot, leaving some of the jewelry in the car. Swiss police fingered Rocancourt as a suspect.

A wanted man, he fled to the U.S. By late 1991, at the age of 24, Rocancourt had settled in Los Angeles, where he began making friends among the city's French expatriates; in time he was to find Angelenos far more gullible than the Parisians he had left behind. One of the first people he met was Charles Glenn, the French-born wine salesman. Glenn was sitting in Cafe Maurice one afternoon when a man next to him turned and asked, "Do you speak French?" The stranger, who introduced himself as Christopher Rocancourt, said he was a boxer, the reigning European champion no less, and was in town for a major fight that evening.

When Rocancourt asked Glenn for a ride to his fight, Glenn happily obliged. He chauffeured him to downtown Los Angeles, but there Rocancourt appeared to grow confused, saying he couldn't find the site of the fight. They stopped at the Bonaventure Hotel, where Glenn grew irritated as Rocancourt shuttled back and forth between the car and a pay phone, saying he was checking with his manager. Eventually Rocancourt said the other fighter had forfeited. When they returned to Glenn's car, Rocancourt produced a large roll of bills. "He gave me $500 and said, 'Charles, when we get back to Cafe Maurice, tell them I won by a knockout in the first round,'" Glenn recalls. "So I took it. I'm not rich. So that's what I told everybody. We had quite a celebration that night."

Glenn took pity on the young "fighter," letting him sleep on his couch for several months, showing him the city's nightclubs, and introducing him to other Frenchmen. Rocancourt quickly demonstrated a knack for ingenious grifting. When he discovered that one of Glenn's friends, Pierre, was remodeling his home in Bel Air, Rocancourt proposed to buy it, then swiftly moved in. To get rid of Pierre, he appropriated the American Express card of another of Glenn's friends, a Japanese girl, and bought Pierre a ticket for a lengthy Portuguese vacation. With Pierre out of the way, Rocancourt lived rent-free in the Bel Air home for several months. When Pierre demanded payment, Rocancourt told him to travel to Geneva, promising to wire him the money there. The money never came, so Rocancourt moved out; a bank then foreclosed on Pierre's house, Glenn says.

But Rocancourt's real gift was seducti One evening in June 1992, Glenn t him to L.A.'s Bar One, where Rocanc bet him he could get a date with the bea ful young coat-check girl. Her name Gry Park, and Rocancourt sent Glenn to her with a message. "I was reading Bible; I love the Lord," remembers Par born-again Christian. "He had some come over to me and say he wanted to m ry me because he loved the Lord. I s 'No, I just come here to work.' But he di give up. For a long, long time he wo come in every night and just sit next to and say nothing.... He said he didn't sp any English.... He was very passionate persuasive. [Finally I said,] 'Now I've t you no for six weeks.' [So] he said, 'I will to church with you.' And he did. He went church. He would cry a lot. He was re sad. At first I didn't know why."

The doe-eyed young Frenchman told P his name was Christopher De Laurent and said he was the nephew of film prod er Dino De Laurentiis. That August she nally gave in to his overtures and, thou they hadn't even kissed, agreed to join h on a Hawaiian vacation. "I said, 'We have have separate rooms,' and we did," she members. "He was very much the gen man.... We just sat and talked and talk and talked. He still couldn't speak Engli Most of the time we talked through this terpreter he hired."

Then, on a flight to an outlying isla Rocancourt began to cry. He was trying tell Park something, but couldn't find words. "He pointed his finger, he made gesture like a gun," Park remembers. " said he had a robbed a bank, that he h done bad things. He said he wanted to st I didn't believe him, of course. I said, 'Ye I robbed a bank, too.'" In time Park w overwhelmed by Rocancourt's affections. was like something out of a French fil quiet and loving, haunted and scarred. don't know what he's like with other peop but with me he's desperate, he's sad, he wa to change," says Park. "He never spea above a whisper.... His heart was just hard, he was so hurt.... He would confe to taking money from people. He alwa came to me to confess."

They began taking trips to Las Veg where Rocancourt enjoyed attending b ing matches. "This one time we got m ried," Park says with a sigh. "It's a long s ry." It was October 1992, and her impulsi decision to marry the mysterious Fren man transformed her life. Ejected from t Bel Air home, Rocancourt took his new w and settled into a luxurious suite at the Pe insula Beverly Hills hotel. There they din frequently on meals delivered by one of R cancourt's first American targets, the Hol

od restaurateur Silvio de Mori, who then ned an aging spot named Tutto Benne. cancourt, who often visited the restau- t in a chauffeur-driven Rolls-Royce, of- ed to buy Tutto Benne for $3.75 million. cording to people who knew both men, Mori liked the young man enough to d him $5,000 or so, then accepted Ro- ncourt's invitation to fly to Milan with n to retrieve enough money to repay that ot and buy Tutto Benne.

De Mori's suspicions were aroused, how- r, when the two men arrived at the Los geles airport and Rocancourt, saying he s short on cash, suddenly asked de Mori buy the airline tickets. The restaurateur grily bought the tickets, then simmered in Milan hotel while Rocancourt disappeared days on end, ostensibly to get the money. e money never appeared, and upon their urn to L.A. the restaurateur severed his s to Rocancourt; de Mori, who says he nembers nothing about Rocancourt, de- nes comment.

Back in L.A. the newlyweds engaged in eries of escalating arguments. Creditors ot calling, demanding money. Nothing out her new husband, Park realized, ded up. He said his father was a diplo- t, but his parents never visited, never oned. She began to suspect he was a drug aler, or worse. Finally, she told him, "Ei- r you tell me everything or I'm going to ve you." Once again Rocancourt broke wn. In tears, he said he was a criminal, rt of the Italian Mafia. Within days Park, then several months pregnant, left him, ving in with her sister in San Francisco.

Rocancourt followed, relocating to Sausal- ito. He began pestering Park with fran- phone calls, beseeching her to rejoin him. wit's end, Park called the San Francisco ice of the F.B.I. "He was so crazy, I could l something was really wrong," she re- ls. "I called the F.B.I. almost as a joke. I ess I was calling to get information about n. I told [the operator] I was married to man named Christopher Rocancourt. [I d,] 'If you've heard of this guy, then I can p you.' Within a minute, an F.B.I. agent led me, and within five minutes they were my house."

An agent named Mark Irish explained to rk that Rocancourt was wanted by the iss police; after a tip from the Swiss that was in the Sausalito area, Irish had been cking Rocancourt for some time. All he nd was a string of people in Sausalito and Napa Valley who claimed Rocancourt d swindled them. In Napa, Rocancourt, still asquerading as Christopher De Laurentiis, d people he was in the area to purchase a eyard. "[Irish] said, 'We can't catch this y, he's very intelligent,'" Park recalls. "'Will u help us?' I said, 'Yeah, I'll help you.'"

The agents placed a trace on her sister's phone. The chase went on for weeks. Rocancourt would call, he and Park would talk, and the F.B.I. would throw up its hands; somehow, the agents told Park, Rocancourt was able to camouflage his calls to appear as if they were coming from disparate locations. One moment the F.B.I. would check a phone in New York, the next, a phone in Los Angeles; Rocancourt was nowhere to be found. Then, in June, agents caught a break, tracking him to San Francisco's landmark Fairmont Hotel, where a frightened employee gave them Rocancourt's briefcase and a duffel bag containing a .22-caliber pistol. The employee told the F.B.I. that he'd heard Rocancourt was also in possession of an Uzi machine gun and two hand grenades. "If you fuck with me," the employee reported Rocancourt as saying, "I'll put two bullets in your brain."

But still the con man eluded them. Finally, for reasons Park didn't understand, an agent told her to instruct Rocancourt to call early in the morning, before dawn. "So I told him I was leaving, he would never see me again, and if he wanted to say good-bye, he had to call early the next morning," Park recalls.

Rocancourt called at the appointed time and said a teary good-bye. Minutes later, Park's phone rang once more. It was Rocancourt, calling from Las Vegas, telling her he had just been arrested by the F.B.I. "He told me, 'I know you did this,'" Park remembers. "'Nobody could have done this to me but you. [But] you don't ever have to worry about your life, because I'll never kill you.'"

Park sighs. "That was comforting," she says.

Rocancourt was extradited to Geneva, where he faced charges on the jewelry robbery. According to U.S. officials, the charges were ultimately dropped, apparently because Swiss prosecutors had insufficient evidence to go to trial. Whatever happened, the Swiss handed Rocancourt over to the French police, who wanted him on old swindling charges. Rocancourt entered a prison outside Paris in 1994. From prison he wrote elaborate love letters to Park and his new daughter, who was born after his arrest. "They were beautiful letters, for his daughter, how much he loves her, how he was going to be different and get a real job," says Park. "He would just write and write. He called me from jail all the time, making me nuts."

In mid-1995, Rocancourt was released. Park was stunned; the F.B.I. had said he would be imprisoned for life. From France he sent her a plane ticket. Against her better judgment, and because she didn't want him to return to California, Park flew to Paris to see him. Amazingly, their romance rekindled. Days turned to weeks. Rocancourt, now bulked up from a prison weight-lifting regime, took her to Honfleur, where he introduced her to a man he said was his brother.

"He was just the same, really loving," she recalls. "He pledged honesty and faithfulness, you know, the whole bit, how he wanted to go straight, how he wanted to take care of my daughter. Was I swept away? No, I wasn't, and yes, I was. Intellectually I knew, but emotionally . . . Oh, it was complicated. He made me feel very, very, very loved. He said he would die for me in a minute. . . . [He also said,] 'If I ever find out you divorced me, I'll kill you.'" Park thought it best not to tell him she had already had their marriage annulled.

She told him to stay in France. But when she returned to Los Angeles, he followed. They reunited briefly, then broke up. He was penniless, living hand to mouth, pelting her with phone calls, promising his undying love. Then, one evening in late 1995, he showed up at her house while Park was holding a prayer meeting. "That night he just lost it," she recalls. "He started crying, [saying,] 'My life is horrendous, my life is a living hell. I need God.'" Park was unmoved. She threw him out. He sat on the sidewalk, crying for what seemed like hours. Finally a missionary in attendance named Marjorie took pity on him. She told Park she would take him in.

"Marjorie took over his life, for like six months," Park remembers. "They had no money, they just moved from couch to couch, you know, at friends' houses. She [called and said,] 'Omigosh, he goes to Bible study, he goes to church. He's a totally different man.'" One day Park reluctantly accepted Rocancourt's invitation to visit him at a church in Pasadena, where they sat as he once again poured out his heart to her, telling her how God had changed his life. She didn't believe him.

Within a year he had married a *Playboy* Playmate and moved into the Regent Beverly Wilshire.

Rocancourt's ticket back to the good life came thanks to his budding friendship with Shahram Moussazadeh, the backgammon-playing boutique owner who for a time bankrolled his lush lifestyle. He met his future wife, Pia Reyes, when she was a hostess at a now defunct restaurant on Santa Monica Boulevard and intervened on his behalf when a "problem" developed with his credit card. After a whirlwind romance, they were married in Las Vegas in May 1996.

Even after he was married, however, Gry Park was never far from Rocancourt's thoughts. On the day Reyes went into labor with Zeus, in 1997, Park says, Rocancourt called her, and they had lunch. The next day, not 12 hours after the birth of his son, Rocancourt called once more, beseeching her to run off to Hong Kong with him. "Can you believe that?" she asks today. "I was

Christopher Rockefeller

like, 'Who are you? Are you on drugs?'"

Each time Rocancourt called, Park implored him to leave her alone, once and for all. "If I would cry, and he would see I was sincere, he would leave me alone," she says. "I told him, 'You're hurting me, you're hurting my children. If you really understood life, if you really understood what your daughter needs, you would leave us alone. If you insist on being in her life, she will be like you. Give her a chance to have a normal, nice life.' And he would leave me alone for six months. But he would always come back."

In 1998, Rocancourt made what turned out to be his last visit to his former wife. Park, who by then had gotten remarried, to a filmmaker, was at home one evening when she walked into her living room and was stunned to find Rocancourt had entered, unannounced. With him was a 350-pound Samoan bodyguard, carrying a pistol.

"He wanted to take my daughter," Park remembers. "It was very tense. He was horrible. My husband is very intelligent. He befriended the bodyguard, offering him something to drink. We stayed there all night, talking." Park's husband, looking to defuse an explosive situation, eased things further by making Rocancourt a proposition. "I said, 'Chris, you know, we should make a movie of your life,'" he recalls. "We talked about that. He got very excited."

Rocancourt's disappearance from Los Angeles in late 1998 once again left investigators empty-handed. At one point, George Mueller of the L.A. District Attorney's Office received a tip that he was back in Italy, trying to put together a scheme to smuggle drugs through the South of France. Charles Glenn heard that he was in Saint-Tropez. Investigators have since fielded a report putting Rocancourt in Nashville for a time.

But wherever he had been, by late 1999 Rocancourt was in New York, along with Pia and Zeus, comfortably ensconced in a $6,500-a-month loft apartment on White Street in Lower Manhattan. In six months there he accumulated a familiar string of victims, according to one investigator; whether out of fear or embarrassment, not one has yet come forward to tell his or her story. They include an immigrant businessman who got taken for an estimated $175,000; an Upper East Side retail store that gave Rocancourt $40,000 of merchandise for which it never received payment; his landlord, stiffed for $20,000; two more establishments, taken for an estimated $50,000; and an employee of one of the establishments, who gave Rocancourt $40,000 to invest in the stock market. His biggest mark may have been a wealthy woman he seduced. Investigators say the woman, who has also refused to come forward, gave Rocancourt $90,000 in cash; in addition, watches and jewelry valued at more than $250,000 were stolen from her home. "She's not Ivana Trump," says the investigator who has interviewed the woman, "but she's not exceedingly stressed over losing 350K."

In May, Rocancourt, along with Pia, Zeus, and his new assistant, "Joseph"—actually a Brooklyn man named Dante Daniello—moved on to the Hamptons, where they registered at the Pink House in East Hampton. Rocancourt spent his days house-hunting with a real-estate agent, who, investigators say, eventually gave him $108,000 to invest in the stock market; she never saw any of it again. Not everyone he met was so gullible: a woman named Nancy Lorenzen rejected his entreaties to invest with him after a few games of tennis. Lorenzen didn't believe a man of Rocancourt's supposed means would be playing at the East Hampton public court beside the Waldbaum's grocery store.

Rocancourt was a regular at the Palm restaurant in East Hampton, where he smoked Cuban cigars; then he would make the rounds of all the area's busiest nightclubs. During June and July he shuttled among several hotels, including the Maidstone Arms in East Hampton, usually slipping out without paying his bill. Sometime in July he began calling himself Christopher Rockefeller. It was under this guise that he befriended the masseuse at the East Hampton Gym, Corine Eeltink, who gave him $14,000 on the promise he would triple her money. In turn, Eeltink introduced Rocancourt not only to the Spanish painter Gines Serran-Pagan but also to several friends staying with her at a house in Water Mill, where Rockefeller began dropping by to play tennis.

Then, on Saturday, July 22, after Eeltink's father had a stroke in the Netherlands, she telephoned her friend Kevin McCrary and asked him to contact Rockefeller and give him an additional $125,000 she had promised him. McCrary met her at Kennedy Airport, took her instructions, then headed to the house in Water Mill, where he met Rockefeller and his aide, Joseph, and accepted an invitation to join them and a group of friends at a nightclub called NV. McCrary was immediately suspicious. Though the group sat in the V.I.P. section and drank Dom Pérignon, the Frenchman didn't seem like any Rockefeller he had ever met. He had a gaudy tattoo of an eagle on his right arm, bad posture, and a weak handshake. His friend Laurent claimed to be a runway model, but knew little about the modeling world. And Joseph—"Call me Joey D"—was too coarse for words.

"He set me off immediately: How could Rockefeller be associated with such a bu bling fool?" McCrary remembers thinking. didn't fit. Nothing fit. He's French. My fam has known the Rockefellers for decades: N son, David. We've known them for years. there's one thing I know, it's growing around money. He didn't feel like money."

McCrary's suspicions hardened the n day when he and Rockefeller met for seve sets of tennis. Afterward, McCrary disc ered that his own Hamptons host, a sto broker named Tom Gregory, had giv Rockefeller $50,000. The two men got int loud argument when McCrary insisted Ro efeller was a fake; Gregory got so mad wanted McCrary to leave the house. Retu ing to Manhattan, McCrary went to the 1 Precinct, on 67th Street, and tried to rep a crime. A policeman asked where the cri was. McCrary had to admit he wasn't sur

Instead of handing Rockefeller the rest Eeltink's money, McCrary engaged in a ries of phone calls in which he demand that Rockefeller return the $14,000 he h already taken. When Rockefeller seemed drag his feet, McCrary turned to the poli in Hampton Bays, meeting them on the nig of Tuesday, August 1. It was that night, af sensing that the police were less than enth siastic about the case, that McCrary track Rockefeller down to the Mill-Garth Count Inn in Amagansett.

The next morning two detectives from t Hamptons, Jerry Larsen and Robe Flood, phoned McCrary and asked him join them on a stakeout at the East Hampt Gym, where Rocancourt had been spotte There, in an unmarked car parked by a re Dumpster, McCrary listened as the two d tectives made several phone calls in an tempt to pin a provable crime on the Frenc man. When they called the Mill-Garth, th discovered that Rocancourt had left th morning without paying his $8,000 bill. "A there's a crime!" McCrary cried.

They waited. By and by Rocancourt ar Joseph strolled out of the health club ar walked over to a car; the three men watch as Rocancourt talked with two women—La rent and Rocancourt's wife, Pia, who seem to be acquainted. The detectives told M Crary to get out of the car so they could f low Rocancourt. McCrary slipped through set of bushes and, taking a seat on a benc along Highway 27, watched as the two dete tives slowly followed behind Rocancourt ar Joseph as they walked into East Hampton.

The two men were subsequently detain and Rocancourt was thrown into jail. Josep was released and took a worried call fro Gines Serran-Pagan, who had scheduled meeting with Rocancourt that afternoon. I formed that Rocancourt had been arreste the painter pledged to do anything he cou

get him released. In the meantime, Pagan
l Joseph, "I will fill the jail with my paint-
s so that he can sleep quietly in peace."
Placed in custody on charges of false per-
nation and theft of services, Rocancourt
e police a passport identifying himself as
abien Ortuna." The next day, after hiring
n Gotti's defense attorney, Bruce Cutler,
posted a cash bond of $45,000.
And vanished. Again.

Fabien Ortuna"'s arrest and disappear-
ance produced little news outside minor
ns in Long Island newspapers. It was only
r police checked his fingerprints and be-
dly discovered he was actually Christophe
cancourt that the chase began. In the
e of Rocancourt's disappearance, a small
y of law-enforcement officials and media
anizations mobilized to follow his trail.
By October, after stories in the *New York*
t and *The New York Times,* the throng included F.B.I. agents and U.S. marshals, as well as crews from NBC's *Dateline,* ABC's *Prime-Time,* CNN, and Court TV. From New York to L.A., most of Rocancourt's alleged victims refused to cooperate. But Charles Glenn opened a thriving business selling Rocancourt videotapes and photographs. A Manhattan private eye on the case, meanwhile, put the price tag for his own stash of Rocancourt photos and videos at $100,000.

Rocancourt began using intermediaries to approach media outlets, including *V.F.* "I would not consider myself a criminal—I steal with my mind," he told a *New York Times* reporter in an hour-long telephone interview. "If I take things, if that is your definition of a criminal, then I am a criminal. . . . If they catch me, I will make no deal. I will do my time." He said he felt no guilt over fleecing his victims. "I feel sorry for their greed."

At this writing, Rocancourt remains a fugitive. Everyone involved has a different theory about where he is hiding. Montreal. Paris. Rome. Bangkok. Miami. San Diego. Venezuela. "I can assure you that wherever he is he loves what's going on right now," says Lillian Pinho. "Because of the attention. He loves the attention."

Those who knew Rocancourt remain sharply divided in their judgments. Some want him strung up. Others, like Rhonda Rydell, remain enamored of him even after learning of his lies. Still others have developed a grudging respect for a poor, orphaned French boy who grew up to fleece the rich and the gullible. "He's like Rocky," says Charles Glenn. "He's the Rocky of con men."

"He is not a cold, calculating criminal; I've been around him, I know," says Pagan. "The guy is a dreamer. He walked like a Rockefeller, in an emperor's shoes. He does not belong in jail. The people who gave him money, they belong in jail. For stupidity." □

Oxygen

NTINUED FROM PAGE 105 mother. Beauty
een. Think like a lover. Bunny. Soccer
m. Hostess with the mostest. Oxygen.
ink like yourself." Another stated, "Oxy-
: Enjoyed by bad girls everywhere." Cut
a woman, bundled up for winter. "To
w tire or not to snow tire, that's a ques-
," she said brightly. Cut to three voices.
s all chicks?" one asked. "Yeah, nothing
," said another. "Play like a girl with Oxy-
Sports," said the third. Cut to a woman,
ne, in a wedding dress. "We were sup-
ed to get married, but he blew me off,"
said. Cut to a mother meeting her new-
n baby. "Happy Labor Day from Oxygen."
The clips were a reminder that Oxygen's
get audience is younger and sassier than
etime's. But demographics matter less to
bourne than what she calls "psycho-
phics." Famously addicted to social-
ence research and focus groups, she says
men fall into five distinct categories. There
"the disaffected," for whom television
narcotic, like tobacco—"They will never
ch Oxygen," she says. There are "the con-
ted," some of whom might occasionally
e in. Oxygen is aiming for the rest: "the
ievers," "the changers," and "the adven-
ers." "Women today don't feel like they're
tims, they don't feel 'Woe is me,'" she ex-
ins. And they are sophisticated: No long-
can women's programming be "just about
ways to thinner thighs."

o far, Laybourne feels her vision has been
fulfilled. "We've hit all of our targets, in
ms of revenues, in terms of subscribers, in
ms of page views," Laybourne claims. Her script calls for Oxygen to be in 50 million homes by 2004; by the end of 2002, she says, it will be two-thirds there. (That's crucial because, while Oxygen has struck special deals with Johnson & Johnson, Hewlett-Packard, and Procter & Gamble, advertisers generally do not pay much attention before a network can claim 20 to 30 million subscribers.) Oxygen executives say that the network is available in some parts of Los Angeles, and will soon be available in more. As for programming, "we've created 15 completely different new series, right out of the box. That's unheard of. There is no new network with that much original content that looks as good as Oxygen. Nowhere. Not in any country of the world. It's so great. The only thing it isn't is the Second Coming, and we never thought that." So eager was she to push convergence, she admits, that Oxygen passed on more expensive, labor-intensive programs—dramas and comedies. But Carsey-Werner-Mandabach will soon rectify that with a multigenerational sitcom and other projects.

Laybourne ridicules the notion that had Oxygen not been so hyped at the outset it would not be so scrutinized now. "And that would really have been possible with Oprah Winfrey, Marcy Carsey, and me," she says sarcastically. "That's a great piece of advice. That's brilliant. I wish I thought of that myself." Nor, she says, was getting on in New York right away or having a smash hit at the start ever realistic. "People say, 'Well, why didn't you have a hit out of the box?' I don't know, because that was on our business plan: Have a hit, right out of the box," she declares. Her disdain for such fatuous thinking is obvious, but she is taking no chances. "If you're going to quote me, you better put that there was a smirk on my face," she says. No one remembers, she points out, that it took five years for Nickelodeon to make a hit out of *Rugrats.*

Oprah has seemed scarce around Oxygen, apart from a 12-part series in which she and Gayle King learned how to surf the Internet; her promised talk show, *Oprah & . . . ,* has yet to happen. Around the office, staffers have seldom seen her, and were told to steer clear of her when they did. Nor has she done much on her syndicated show or in her wildly popular new magazine to push Oxygen, stoking rumors that she is unhappy with how it has evolved and is distancing herself from it.

Carsey concedes that she and her partners have trod lightly with Oprah, fearing she is stretched too thin. But Winfrey, she says, recently asked to become more involved; during a visit to New York in October, she gave a pep talk to the staff at *Pure Oxygen,* pledged to call the control room periodically to kibitz on-air, and offered to film an upcoming trip to Africa for Oxygen. Winfrey's level of participation evidently satisfies Laybourne. "This isn't called *Oprah,*" she says. But it's clear that even she proceeds gingerly with Winfrey; she could not deliver her for an interview, forcing me to settle for a pallid written statement instead. (In it, Winfrey reiterated her faith in Oxygen and pledged to give it her continued "creative energies.") The folks at Oxygen made me feel that both I and they were lucky to get even that.

Oxygen is a private company—in today's bear market, going public is no longer an option—and Laybourne will not say how much of her original $300 million stake she's already burned through, nor what her profits and losses have been. She is now

Oxygen

looking for an additional $150 million, offering stock warrants and chunks of the company—though not, she says, all or even half of it, as *The Wall Street Journal* reported in October—in return. It's not a fire sale, she insists, but something that was planned all along. With dollars so much scarcer now, her task is not easy, particularly since many consider Oxygen's revised, reduced valuation—$700 to $900 million—still way too high. Paul Allen, who has already put up $100 million, is said to be ready with more. Viacom chief Mel Karmazin was recently seen around Oxygen, but he can't invest in it without winning over Viacom chairman Sumner Redstone, and Redstone, who owns Nickelodeon, says he's not interested.

Once, Laybourne predicted that the cable and Web sides of Oxygen would be equally valuable; given the collapse of Internet stocks, the ratio is probably more like 15 or 20 to 1. But her insistence, contrary to the advice of her investment bankers, that Oxygen be a joint cable and on-line property has been vindicated. "If we were just a dot-com company, you would be writing our obituary," she says.

Does Laybourne think people are waiting for her to fail? "Oh, I hope not," she replies wearily. "Not with the goodwill I have towards them. I hope not, for the state of man- and womankind today. I've been so incredibly generous in my life to make opportunities for people." But, for Gerry Laybourne, it's always been "us" against "them"; it was Nickelodeon against Disney, and kids against their parents. I feel adversarial vibes from across the table; I am "them," at least whenever my questions appear too pointed. But there is one question she actually wants me to pose. "You didn't ask me if I was having fun," she observes. She says she is.

Laybourne grew up in Martinsville, New Jersey. Her father, a stockbroker named Paterson Bond, gave his middle daughter his business savvy; from her mother, Gwen, who wrote radio soap operas and turned off the TV mid-program to make her children come up with their own endings, Laybourne got her dramatic flair. Shortly after graduating from Vassar in 1969, she married a free-spirited filmmaker named Kit Laybourne, now Oxygen's head of Animation and Special Projects; two children quickly followed. One of them, 29-year-old Emmy, is appearing on the NBC sitcom *DAG;* the other, 26-year-old Sam, teaches in the New York City public schools.

Laybourne got a graduate degree in elementary education at the University of Pennsylvania, and taught prep school for a time. She also collaborated with her husband on children's-television projects. It was through her filmmaking that Laybourne joined the new, struggling Nickelodeon in 1979. By 1984—when Nickelodeon had become part of MTV Networks—she'd taken over the place. She dressed up cheap old shows and, once the money started flowing, began creating her own, replacing eat-your-spinach fare with stuff kids loved: offbeat, irreverent, sometimes gross. Aided by public-relations guru Kenneth Lerer, Laybourne became one of Nickelodeon's prime public assets; wholesome and soft-spoken, the antithesis of the fast-talking, ball-busting female executive, she was everyone's favorite schoolteacher.

But not everyone at Nickelodeon shared in the glory. Though Laybourne was famously generous with praise inside the building, many felt she was stingy with it outside. Laybourne, too, grew unhappy. She resented MTV chief Freston, wanting to report only to Redstone after Viacom bought MTV Networks in 1986. She disliked Viacom's then president, Frank Biondi, who she felt thwarted her work. That arch-rival Disney, whose programs she had long ridiculed, started courting her did not come as a surprise; a call to her from Michael Ovitz, then Disney's number two, was mistakenly put on the speakerphone during a Nickelodeon meeting. Eisner and Robert Iger, then head of Disney-owned Capital Cities/ABC, also wooed her, and around Christmas 1995 they won her hand, in a deal said to be worth some $3 million a year. "I'm not a psychiatrist, but you might say it was a way to express her disdain for the way she was treated: 'I'm not only leaving but going to the arch-enemy, so fuck you too,'" one eyewitness recalls. The executives she left behind seem to relish telling you that Nickelodeon has nearly tripled in size since she departed.

With Disney having anointed her, Laybourne was, in the words of the *Los Angeles Times,* "unquestionably the most powerful woman in television." But it was probably predictable that she could never have traded the warm, familiar bath of Nickelodeon for the more treacherous waters of Disney without running aground. After a short love-in, the Disney brass tired of hearing her endlessly tout her successes at Nickelodeon and drop Eisner's name with a loud thud at every opportunity. On the Disney plane, one former Disney executive recalled, others usually held back until Eisner chose his seatmate; Laybourne swooped right in. When Eisner invited her along on a bicycle trip through Mississippi, everyone soon knew about it. Peers considered Laybourne high-maintenance. They felt she overresearched everything instead of going with her gut. Some thought her excessively concerned with her image as a reformer and a player; it didn't help when a fan told *The New York Times* in 1997 that "the nai Gerry Laybourne is better than Disney. cause Gerry Laybourne is current." Fa ly or otherwise, when stories popped touting her chances in Disney's perpet wars of succession, fellow executives thou they saw her fingerprints, or those of surrogates.

The disillusionment soon became mutu Ostensibly in charge of all Disney cable op ations, she was irked that ESPN was outsi her jurisdiction. Shortly after she arriv Iger scotched a proposed 24-hour news eration that would also have been in bailiwick. That Lifetime had a man, Doug McCormick, at its helm had long rankl her, but because Disney and Hearst owne jointly, her efforts to have him fired w frustrated. Her pet project, an ambitious e cational network called ABZ, got nowhe largely because it promised huge losses many years to come. Mostly, the can- quixotic Laybourne was out of place in c tious, bureaucratized Disney—and she everyone know it. "She wore her frustrati on her sleeve," another executive remembe even "with the guy who delivered the mai Iger, who had once said that Laybourne w "great to have around," came to write h off as a "loon" and a "pain in the ass," cording to two executives who worked w him. (Iger declined comment.)

In May 1998, scarcely two and a half ye into her five-year deal, Laybourne left. W an eye on damage control, Disney gave h some money—"well under $10 million," cording to one who knew—and called it investment in Oxygen. Laybourne says h Disney years "were really fantastic for me a lot of ways," and points proudly to h successes: inspiring original programming Lifetime; tripling the number of subscribe to the Disney Channel; fixing ABC's Saturd morning lineup of children's shows. As f ABZ, she said that it was "probably ahe of its time and too radical a concept." A at Disney, which was still assimilating AB and torn over questions of Eisner's health a succession, says Laybourne, "There was much room for bravery."

"There are people who clearly didn't li the fact that I was brought in at the level was brought in and that there was so mu hoopla about it," she adds. "I know the were people who didn't want me there." An she says, "there was plenty of jealousy. If m goal was to work my way up the ladder Disney, I would have done a million thin differently. I didn't go to Disney to climb a c reer ladder, but to create new stuff."

Free at last, free at last, Laybourne launche Oxygen. Determined not to enmesh he self with another large corporation, she d clined an offer to join forces with Time Wa ner's proposed—and subsequently aborted

›men's channel. She began hiring hun-eds of people in mid-1999; for the young, e hip, the idealistic, Oxygen became the ace to be. An "Oxygen Tank" really an rstream trailer—traveled around the coun- evangelizing. "You felt that the world was behind Oxygen that it was exhilarating," s Sarah Bartlett, a former student of Lay-urne's who was a reporter for *The New rk Times* and an assistant managing editor *Business Week* before signing on to run xygen.com (a post she has since left). ep-deprived staffers cheered when Oxy-n ran a $2 million ad during Super Bowl 00 (a gesture seen as profligate, pointless, d vain by outsiders) and cheered again ring the gala launch at Chelsea Market ee days later, when Laybourne and Win-y ticked off the seconds until Oxygen nt on the air. The date was February 2—/02 to chemistry buffs.

Always, there were skeptics. "I'm with u, Gerry, but I have my doubts," televi-n newsman Ted Koppel wrote in a jour-l entry at the time, now included in his ok, *Off Camera: Private Thoughts Made blic.* The television critics were unforgiv-g last January when Winfrey and Bergen, e to a scheduling snafu, stood them up at e Television Critics Association conven-n. And, throughout, convergence proved emature on the outside—computers and evisions remained different machines, of-n on at different times and in different oms—and problematic inside.

Internet start-ups are always difficult, but rmally they are in the hands of qualified hies. However, workers on Oxygen's Web es felt like stepchildren, paid less and ced to work on far tighter budgets than ir television counterparts. Because they d come from print or television, many on the Internet side didn't know the technology. And Oxygen's technology was primitive. E-mail didn't work. When a hacker put some pornography on one Web page, it took forever to fix; when viruses disabled the system, it took too long to get things back up. Morale plummeted in the Internet division; by this past summer, the going-away parties were communal, and one couldn't walk by a printer without seeing a résumé emerging.

Nothing exemplified the perils of convergence more vividly, and sometimes comically, than the teen show *Trackers.* Its Web site, like several of Oxygen's sites at the time, was "flat"—that is, with only limited use of animation, audio, and interactivity. "And we were supposed to be a converged company," one Web worker lamented. Convergence became largely cosmetic: the Internet types were told to work alongside the cable people, with the prettiest women (Mandabach's daughter among them) placed strategically within camera range. Web producers were thereby forced to do their ruminative, highly complicated work in the midst of live bands, screaming teenagers, and a game show, and in subarctic conditions, too (the heat wasn't working during the seemingly perpetual construction)—all for a product that cyber-sophisticated teens knew was inferior. "Teenagers spend tons of time on TV and the computer; it was such an obvious place to throw money and experiment," said one of the many employees who fled shortly after the launch. "It's totally tragic that it didn't work out."

Laybourne takes me down to the third floor, where Oxygen is at its most daring. She and her husband introduce me to Michael Rosenblum, a veteran documentary producer who runs a "digital boot camp" for Oxygen staffers, teaching them how to handle the ingenious compact digital video cameras that are revolutionizing filmed reportage. And to Julina Tatlock, who has "The Ruth Truth," a fabulously clever interactive cartoon created by Sheila Head and directed by Tatlock, on her screen. In another room, Laybourne points to a small, redheaded woman huddled over a computer. "That's Breakup Girl," she says proudly, referring to Lynn Harris, creator of breakupgirl.com, one of Oxygen's most popular Web sites. "She helps people with their relationships through humor and dignity."

Humor and dignity are traits that Laybourne herself might need in the days ahead. "Generally do I think she's in a great position? No," says an executive at one of the companies with which she's seeking an alliance. "I don't think people are coming out and saying, 'Oh, my God, everything she's done is spectacular.' ... When Gerry went to Disney she could have gone anywhere; it was 'Gerry the Indestructible.' Now she's sitting with what looks like damaged merchandise. If it were trading as a public company, you would assume that the stock would be way under what it was a year ago." Leo Hindery also seems to acknowledge Laybourne's problems. "What if she's a total bust? So what? She tried," he says. "I think she's going to be wildly successful, but even if she's not, she tried with quality and honor and passion. Isn't that enough?"

For Geraldine Laybourne, the answer is a resounding, defiant "No." After I bid her good-bye and am about to leave, she walks back over to me—whether spontaneously or according to some script, I cannot tell—and looks me in the eyes. "Remember, this is a marathon, not a sprint," she says. "I'm in this for the long run. We're going to go all 26 miles." □

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rnst of Hanover

NTINUED FROM PAGE 114 widowed (by Italian businessman Stefano Casiraghi, o died in a powerboat accident a decade o), Caroline was 39 and a mother of three the time she surreptitiously took up with future third husband. She is by all ac-unts highly intelligent, knowing, and very rposeful.

"Other people like her, but I find Caro-e frightening, really frightening," de-res one of her London social friends, o often sees her at parties. "She is so di-t, she certainly knows what she wants. ows how to get it, too."

What she needed, evidently, after her sec-d husband's death was a good father for young children: "And too bad if he nks a bit," as a friend of the princess's puts it. Ernst knew Caroline from way back. She was very close to Chantal, the blonde heiress who was his wife. At Saint-Moritz, Caroline often socialized with the couple in a group that included the Venetian aristocrats Cristiana and Brando Brandolini d'Adda, and Milana and Heinrich von Furstenberg—"the rich von Furstenbergs," as they are known. More to the point, she was aware that her late mother had seriously considered Ernst (as well as Prince Charles, for that matter) a suitable future son-in-law: "Grace had her eye on Ernst way back, when Caroline was about 18, making the rounds," explains Gwen Robyns, an old friend and confidante of the late movie star's. "Caroline thought Charles dreary and dull. But Grace was quite ambitious for her daughter. She said, 'Ernst would be good for Caroline.' But Caroline wouldn't look at him, because he was not very good-looking."

Ernst, in fact, was—to hear Llewellyn tell it—plump and unprepossessing, "quite sort of puddingy," during his early days, with "a sweetness to him that doesn't seem to be there anymore." He wasn't social, and he certainly didn't make a lot of headlines. Many of his friends were minor rock musicians. But he had everything he needed to get ahead in London: a name, a title, a castle, and, it was estimated, a net worth of between $130 and $150 million.

He was the eldest son of yet another Ernst August. (The name endures generation after generation: "It saves on monogrammed linen, silver, and suitcases," Caroline's husband explained once in his more sparkling years.) Indeed, it is said that today's Ernst would be King of England if Salic law, which limits the crown to male heirs, were operative in contemporary Brit-

Ernst of Hanover

ain. The Hanover line, although German in origin, produced many a British monarch: George III, who periodically went mad from the inherited disease porphyria, Queen Victoria, and George V, among them. It was only during World War I that the German branch of the family found itself suddenly at odds with its British royal cousins, who swiftly divested Ernst August's great-grandfather of his British dukedom of Cumberland, his title—Prince of Great Britain and Ireland and his Garter.

All things considered, this was probably just as well. "I had a stepfather who was a German prince, and they wouldn't even touch that family, speak to that family," says Harold Brooks-Baker. Indeed, Ernst's grandfather, as the prince discovered recently via the German press, to his displeasure and disbelief, exhorted his countrymen to support Hitler, "whom God and our beloved Fatherland will protect." He also profited from the forced sale of a Jewish-owned bank in Munich, in which he became a partner after its original owner was sent to Dachau, and from the Nazi expropriation of a Viennese construction company—over 40 percent of the shares owned by Jews passed to the Hanovers.

His son, the father of the current Ernst August, was a former SS officer ultimately jailed by Hitler. His first wife, Ortrud, brought up six children, three boys and three girls, in a fashion of which some of their friends heartily disapproved: "They were like animals, they just did what they wanted," Juliana von Uslar-Gleichen, who knew the family, says of the children, young Ernst included. Her husband, Hans, says: "They were brought up like untrained dogs. The father was very strict, and the mother didn't bother about too much." Ortrud had her own interests: it was she who restored *Schloss* Marienburg, a 19th-century jumble of Grimm-fairy-tale turrets, dummy battlements, suits of armor, and portraits of British and Hanoverian royalty.

The family lived mostly in the nearby and far more habitable Gut Calenberg estate. There the historian John Röhl, who stayed overnight in a bedroom that had last been slept in by King Constantine of Greece, dined 15 years ago: "What I remember most is there was a huge boar, three times the size of a normal pig—a massive, great boar he'd obviously just shot, hanging by its feet. And blood was dripping into a metal bucket. This was in the house."

There was at least one other distinguished scholar eager to meet the father of the current Prince Ernst—the British-German psychiatrist Ida Macalpine, who was researching the terrible genetic illness porphyria. The disease, according to Röhl, has ravaged certain branches of the British royal family, as well as their relatives in other countries. It can produce in up to 10 percent of those affected not only madness but also temporary lameness, violent aggression, red blotches on the skin, and, oddly, purplish urine (which is why Röhl's 1998 book on the subject is called *Purple Secret*). In order to test for the disease among George III's descendants, Macalpine asked for a urine and feces sample from the current prince's father.

"Ernst August did do so. He gave Ida Macalpine a urine sample and a feces sample," says Röhl. This sample, which the psychiatrist assumed to be genuine, proved mildly positive for porphyria. "But years later he said to me, 'It actually wasn't mine.' He said, 'It was my first wife's.'" To this day, Röhl doesn't know what the old prince was up to. "It might have been his."

But one thing Röhl does know: if a single parent is afflicted with the mutated gene, some of whose victims are asymptomatic, the offspring stand a 50 percent chance of acquiring it. "Once it gets into the royal family, given that they interbreed," he says, "you'd expect a huge number of royals to be affected with it. They never outbreed, so to speak. They always stay within the same gene pool."

The historian is quick to say he has no reason to believe that the current Prince Ernst has the disease. (Indeed, Ernst's chain-smoking London family physician told me he didn't, "because I would have known that.") But if by chance he carries the mutated gene, says Röhl, it could well have "come down the main line from George III directly to him. But even if he missed it that way, we know the kaiser's mother, Vicky, had the disorder. We know that the kaiser's sister had the same mutation, because we proved that with DNA. And, incidentally, her daughter [Feodora] too!" Feodora was in and out of sanatoria until she committed suicide in 1945.

One of the indications of the disease, manifested by George III himself and reported by his doctors at the time, is foul language. "He attacked almost everybody verbally," says Röhl. And not only verbally. The British monarch was famous for "attacking women, jumping on them. And addressing trees." One of his sons, the future George IV, who apparently also had the disease, was a drug-addicted, alcoholic, womanizing glutton who talked about grabbing power from his father.

Symptoms vary with the sufferer. But one thing is certain, says Röhl: alcohol, barbiturates, and smoking intensify the illness.

Young Ernst August, living in swinging London in his early 20s, was intensely proud of his royal heritage—so much so that he had absolutely no interest in meeting lesser German aristocrats. Indeed, he had to be pushed initially into an encounter with Leopold "Bolla" Bismarck, a London resident who is the great-grandson of the brilliant unifier of Germany. "[Ernst] said basically the Bismarcks were arrivistes, and he had a much older title," explains Sir David Llewellyn.

As a teenager Ernst went to the little-known Box Hill School in Surrey; within a week he had reportedly received a six-stroke caning after going AWOL. Five months later the 15-year-old was removed from Box Hill "by mutual agreement between me and his father," as Roy McComish, the headmaster of the period, delicately put it, citing the young man's long hair and smoking habit as divisional issues.

The young prince enrolled at the Royal Agricultural College in Cirencester, a British haven for, among others, heirs to large estates. "He took our one-year farming course from October '71 to July '72," explains a spokeswoman for the college. "And then he should normally have been the end of it, but I'm afraid he failed."

More to his taste than agrarian pursuits was bachelor life in London in the mid-70s. Living in a small house among the mews of the higgledy-piggledy streets near the Old Brompton Road cemetery, he dabbled in film, having unearthed some letters that yielded another ancestor—Princess Sophia, Electress of Hanover (and mother of George I)—had written to a sister-in-law of Louis XIV. Ernst decided this had the makings of a great movie.

"He was quite rock 'n' roll-y," says Sir David.

By Ernst's side during this period was Clare Faller, very pretty, with dark slanted brows swooping over almond-shaped eyes, but devoid of the sort of lineage that suited Ernst's family—she was the daughter of a Lloyd's underwriter. By 1978 the long affair was, as the heartsick girlfriend realized, completely over. His parents had disapproved of the match.

Within a year a replacement—a long-haired blonde from Switzerland, new to London—had emerged. Her name was Chantal Hochuli. She was the opposite of Ernst in almost every way—unworldly, unassuming, and, according to one of her early lovers, "very very sweet"—which is the English way of saying, "She was not sort of the Claudia Schiffer type ... wasn't standard glam at all." On the other hand, as one suitor discovered when he took her around town, she had, apart from her excellent figure, a decided appeal—namely, a rich architect father. Friends would nudge him, saying, "You know what that is, don't you? That's a walking cash register."

Certainly, Ernst's social group decided she was very agreeable, and evidently toler-

t of her new boyfriend's worrisome be-
vior. Ernst's parties were famously ob-
eperous, and the host inordinately proud
them: "He told me about a party he
rew at his *Schloss* in Germany where
eryone was dressed in nappies, drank
cktails from bottles with teats, and was
rved by personal liveried footmen," a
end told *Tatler*. One Christmas, Ernst sent
t cards showing him and his film partner,
avid Vaughan, beside a nude model.

In short order, according to a newspaper
port of the time, Prince Ernst would find
nself involved in a beach-bar brawl in Thai-
d after being overcharged for a few drinks.
few fisticuffs, that's all" was how one wit-
ss described it. By his side on this exotic
d memorable jaunt was sweet Chantal. "A
tch made in heaven," a friend decided.
ecause he was quite wild."

In August 1981, the couple
de up in a horse-drawn car-
ge to the turreted castle of
arienburg, where they were
rried in front of hundreds
guests, flown in from all
er the world by Ernst. There
re three parties during the
dding weekend, two hotels
served just for Ernst's guests.
ne of these hotels was given
er entirely to the British
ntingent. Anthony Green-
rgh, a Belgravia doctor, ob-
rved firsthand the behavior
his compatriots that week-
d. "When the Brits go away,
ey do go rather crazy," he
plains. Rowdy? "Very," he
rees. "And the owner of one
the hotels phoned up Ernst
d said, 'I'm very worried
out all your British friends.'
"Ernst said, 'Did you triple
ur insurance? . . . Then don't worry me!'"

The Hanovers became famous for giving
huge surprise parties for assorted friends,
anned down to the smallest detail by
nst, who was a stickler for lavish perfec-
n: bowls filled with caviar, large marquees,
agnums of champagne.

"The kindest, gentlest man there is," in-
ts Dr. Greenburgh, who was the benefi-
ary of one of these festivities, complete
th a West Indian band and 150 guests, on
e occasion of his 60th birthday. A few
ars later Greenburgh would receive, just
some whim of the prince's, a white-gold,
amanté replica of a stethoscope bisected
a diamond, and fashioned by the innova-
e society jeweler Theo Fennell. (He had
come famous for providing Sarah Fergu-
n with a few of her trinkets—a gold cover
her Marmite jar, for example.)

Ernst was a smoker, once attempting, without success, according to a friend, to unseat Disney chairman Michael Eisner's children from the first-class smoking section of a flight to New York. ("Your children don't even smoke!" Ernst protested indignantly.) And Ernst drank, everyone knew that. But his own doctor, now 68, never found this particularly alarming: "It depends on what one calls excess, you see," Dr. Greenburgh says, sipping a lunchtime vodka between puffs of his cigarette. "My definition of an alcoholic is someone who drinks more than his doctor." Besides, "the Germans—they're all fairly heavy drinkers."

The German aristocracy in London certainly tended to be exuberant, as Nicholas Monson, a baron's son, discovered at the wedding of his pretty cousin Debonair to Leopold Bismarck in 1987. Scarcely had the festivities begun than poor Monson found himself assailed: "You are a British homosexual cowardly pig"—this remark sprang from a particularly wealthy heir to a German fortune, who had grabbed him from behind. A scuffle ensued, after which Monson was congratulated by a complete stranger, another wedding guest, also German.

"I really respect you," said the guest. "You have shown yourself to be a real man. You must visit me sometime at one of my *Schlosses*."



FRESH PRINCE

Clockwise from top left: Ernst just before he used his umbrella to hit German TV cameraman Karsten Thürnau, 1998; Thürnau shows his resulting black eye; arriving at the hospital, disco owner Josef Brunlehner writhes in agony from injuries inflicted by Ernst on Lamu, an island off the coast of Kenya, where Ernst owns a vacation home; another view of Ernst's infamous act at Expo 2000.

"How many do you have?" asked Monson.

"Oh, about 12 or 13," said the hospitable guest, who, it turned out, was Prince Ernst. At a stretch he had six great houses, but two of these (along with works of art, 10,000 hectares of land, woods, agricultural fields, and a Cistercian monastery) were in Saxony-Anhalt, then part of East Germany and therefore unavailable to the prince. The properties, worth about $46.4 million, had been expropriated by the Communists after World War II.

"I personally regard this as robbery," said Ernst.

Despite criticism (he was rich enough already, many Germans thought), the prince was hungry for his lost possessions. His grandfather—the Hitler supporter—was, Ernst insisted to the courts, actually a British subject when his properties were expropriated, and his heir was therefore entitled, under Allied law, to their return. Ernst was adamant about the expropriated art, especially: "The law says the artworks are mine," he insisted, although the law had, in fact, said no such thing. "I don't see why people are getting so annoyed about them. If they were nice about them I might donate them; if they become stroppy, I won't."

While Ernst was a young husband, his existence seemed quite blameless for a time. Although they had two sons of their own, the Hanovers attempted, without success, to adopt a third—Ernst's infant nephew, left orphaned in 1988 after the baby's mother overdosed on cocaine and his drug-addicted father, Ludwig (Ernst's younger brother), shot himself in despair.

Gone, apparently, were Ernst's cinematic aspirations. He busied himself with his hobby, collecting and repairing old luggage. He went shooting at Ripley, the Surrey estate of Lord Forte, the hotel magnate. He became a partner in the Watch Gallery, a tiny Fulham shop fitted out in black lacquer and granite, which sells intricately worked timepieces.

By February 1994, however, this hard-won stability seemed to crumble. Ernst was fined £500 for crashing his Mercedes into barriers near Buckingham Palace. He was banned from driving for a year.

There were other changes, equally troubling. One morning, the prince woke up with severe chest pains—no one could quite figure out why, even after an angiogram. His party tricks became more vivid and memo-

Ernst of Hanover

rable: "Three or four years ago, it was at a dinner party one night, we were all discussing men's anatomies, well, their legs and so on," recalls one guest at the London event. "And Ernst just dropped his trousers."

"Chantal didn't take to his excesses too well," this friend continues, "but I think she loved him. She was exceedingly loyal."

That loyalty, say acquaintances, was sorely tried. Ernst was very fond of women. His appearance altered markedly. "He suddenly slimmed down and became a lot better-looking, and then he started getting a roving eye," explains Sir David Llewellyn.

On the other hand, Ernst genuinely liked Chantal, who was very popular within London social circles, and he seemed to have no intention of separating. In 1994, the couple bought the enormous 11-bedroom Hurlingham Lodge, which had been the home of the Earl of March. Ernst deftly set about giving it princely accoutrements: a swimming pool, a servants' snack bar, and an underground garage for Ernst's collection of vintage and new cars, which complemented a half-acre garden, hard by some former polo grounds in Fulham.

And just five years ago Ernst threw his wife another of his famous birthday surprises—she emerged from her room with unwashed hair in a simple dress, expecting to go to a restaurant. Arrayed before the astonished Chantal were 160 of their dearest friends and relations: among them the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, King Constantine II of Greece, and . . . the breathtaking Princess Caroline of Monaco.

"At least Ernst is one of us," Prince Rainier was said to have remarked upon learning, soon after Chantal's birthday party, of Caroline's latest selection. But very likely he had his reservations. "Rainier doesn't like Germans," says Patrick Middleton, the deputy editor of *The Riviera Reporter.* During World War II, he explains, when Rainier's grandfather Louis II turned Monaco into "the financial-management center of the SS," the tiny principality was crawling with Nazis. Rainier, he says, "was disgusted by this attitude." In 1944, barely 21, he joined the French Army.

For all Caroline's considerable intelligence and drive, her taste in men has often been problematic. Grace herself was in despair over her daughter's choice of a first husband, the perpetually tanned and tight-trousered boulevardier Philippe Junot.

"But Caroline was willful, terribly willful—it was a great big sex thing for her," explains Gwen Robyns, who was staying near Roc Agel, the family's country home, when Caroline got engaged "to that ghastly man, Junot." All about the place were enormous floral tributes in honor of the couple, sent by well-wishers: "And Caroline put them all on the black and white tiles of the floor, and she lay down on them and Junot lay down on those flowers," says Robyns. "Grace shuddered."

The marriage ended after 28 months.

Stefano Casiraghi met with greater approval—but not by much, according to John Glatt, who points out in his 1998 book, *The Royal House of Monaco,* that in Casiraghi's younger years his Italian friends gave him the nickname "Fancazzista," meaning "He doesn't do a fucking thing."

In other areas, however, Casiraghi was busy. Like Junot, he enjoyed great success with women. In the fall of 1983—a year after her mother's terrible death in a car crash—Caroline realized she was pregnant, and the couple told Rainier they wanted to get married.

"By March, ten weeks after the wedding, there were reports that the fun-loving Italian was beginning to stray in the manner of Philippe Junot," writes Glatt.

But despite all sorts of news stories and conjecture (there were troubling questions raised, after his marriage, about the source of Casiraghi's newly acquired millions; some of his closest business associates in a suddenly profitable construction business were arrested), the marriage lasted nearly seven years. After her mother's death, Caroline stepped into Grace's shoes, serving essentially as First Lady of Monaco.

Her ambitions didn't stop there. When the press speculated darkly on Monaco's future, noting that her brother, Prince Albert, remained persistently single, Caroline had her private secretary send a note to *The Riviera Reporter.* It was remarkable for its self-assurance, the sly staking of territory in defiance of conventional wisdom: "The [princely] line can be continued through the female descendants," meaning Caroline had determined that she could make up for any possible deficiencies of her brother. And she probably could.

Her second husband was not averse to such a scenario. "If Prince Albert failed to succeed Prince Rainier for some reason, then my wife would rule the principality and I would become Prince Stefano of Monaco," an unabashed Casiraghi informed the press in 1989. A year later he was dead, after a powerboat accident. Six years thereafter Caroline took up with Ernst of Hanover.

Prince Ernst, whose press had been mainly local, deferential, curious only about the christenings of his sons and the pedigreed guests at his parties, couldn't believe what was happening as his affair became bolder and more public. In January 1996 the couple were spied in Bangkok, in a $5,000-a-night penthouse suite at the Oriental Hotel. They then moved on to Rangoon, where they were spotted by the press, who was then informed by the Grimaldi palace that it was a "cultural trip, but there is nothing between the Princess Caroline and the Prince of Hanover."

A few months later, they were seen dining together in London at L'Escargot Doré, before heading for a deluxe local hotel, and then they were snapped holding hands in Paris. In the fall, Ernst was on again by her side—after Caroline became newly but temporarily bald (from a scalp disease, claimed her friends; from shaving her head, her odd way of provoking Ernst into leaving his wife, claimed the gossip columnists).

"I always thought you liked big busty blondes with long hair," Chantal was quoted in London newspapers, "not a woman who's as bald as an ironing board."

It was Chantal who absorbed the result of this media frenzy. Flicking through *Paris Match,* she would chance on a charming close-up of her old friend Caroline and her husband. "A woman can take only so much humiliation," said her friend Taki Theodoracopulos, the gossip columnist. In September 1997, citing her husband's adultery, she obtained a divorce with a settlement of less than $10 million, a $6 million house in Kensington (where Dustin Hoffman was a neighbor), a temporary boyfriend, joint custody of her sons, and a certain amount of sympathy: "What he did to Chantal was terrible, just terrible," reports an old friend. "Everyone liked her."

But she had few weapons at her disposal.

"Caroline grew up fully briefed on the whole business of P.R., manipulating the press," explains Robert Lacey. Her mother, the former Hollywood star, went so far as to acquire her own public-relations man once she became Princess of Monaco. Twice a year, Lacey adds, a *Look*-magazine photographer would come, and "Caroline and the other kids would have to go on parade." The captions below these pictures were always flattering.

But the rabble press was no longer as tame as it had been in Grace's day. "It makes me crazy," the prince complained bitterly to an old acquaintance, Hans von Uslar-Gleichen, once the onslaught began.

With no fanfare at all, Caroline married Ernst on her 42nd birthday—January 23, 1999—thereby acquiring a string of titles far more regal than the ones she had previously held. Because of his kinship with Queen Elizabeth, Ernst had to receive permission from the British monarch to marry her, but that pretty well summed up any royal participation in the union. There were about a dozen guests in attendance at the private ceremony. The bride's younger sister

hanie, remained at home in the Alps. Not for the first time, Caroline was preg- at her wedding.

or some reason, Ernst couldn't under- stand that once he had decided to wed world's most famous princess he might act even more coverage: "It's like people buy houses next door to airports," says vellyn. "And then as soon as they move hey write letters all the time complain- about the noise of aircraft overhead. odd."

Odder still were Ernst's outbursts, which eased in vehemence and number as time t on. Last year, when he was stopped in tria by Christian Hartwagner, the prince ated the uniformed policeman as a "pig" a "cow," according to the press. On rd a British Airways flight last March, his new wife and baby daughter beside , Ernst was said to have leapt from his -class seat, shouting and swearing be- se the captain's voice had interrupted the wing of a movie.

But about his increasingly loutish behav- none of his friends says anything—to st. His tempests, his private habits: these unremarked, says Sir David. "Other nds of my age have become sycophantic ards Ernst—he's got lots of money."

On the other hand, among themselves se friends are more forthcoming, sug- ing that excessive indulgence may be re- nsible for his irrational behavior.

ust last June, after urinating in public, st suffered another strange attack of chest ns. He checked into a 60-room private ic on the river Mosel which specializes in oxification and stress relief. Photographed his side was Caroline, weary, drawn, and e, in a white terry-cloth robe.

"We're going to calm down, be a little frenetic," the prince assured his doctor. e next day the press had the story, and rse: a series of photographs shot through photo lenses, showing the prince alter- ely smoking and picking his nose. The nce fled.

There was yet more bad news awaiting n in August. The Federal Administrative urt in Berlin decided Ernst was not enti- l to the vast properties that had been nfiscated from his grandfather, despite contention that his ancestor was actual- British. The court pointed out that the Ernst August himself had claimed Ger- n citizenship on a 1946 questionnaire the Allied denazification program—and, reover, he had voted for a local party t advocated restoring him to his throne.

"Has Caroline perhaps once again mar- d the wrong man?" asked a German news- per. It is by no means alone in wondering. "She doesn't seem happy—I swear she esn't," says a social friend. "Glum. Glum." □

CREDITS

FASHION

Cover: Catherine Zeta-Jones's Cadolle corset from Agent Provocateur, L.A.; Eres pantie from Eres, N.Y.C.
Page 26: For Catherine Zeta-Jones's Stephen Jones for John Galliano hat, call 011-331-55-25-11-52.
Page 75: Clive Owen's Richard James suit from Bergdorf Goodman, N.Y.C.; T. M. Lewin shirt and bow tie from T. M. Lewin, London; William Gilchrist for CLM.
Page 78: Christian Camargo and **Todd Ashley** styled by Edward Jowdy. Camargo's vintage T-shirt and jacket and Ashley's vintage T-shirt and boots from Polo Ralph Lauren, N.Y.C. Ashley's Levi's Vintage Clothing jeans from Selvedge, N.Y.C.; leather jacket from What Comes Around Goes Around, N.Y.C.
Pages 82–84: Catherine Zeta-Jones's Callaghan top from Kirna Zabête, N.Y.C.
Page 86: See credits for cover.
Page 87: Jana Starr Antiques Chantilly lace from Jana Starr Antiques, N.Y.C.
Page 88: Versace dress from Versace boutiques worldwide, call 1-888-3-VERSACE; Janis Savitt earrings from Neiman Marcus, Beverly Hills.
Page 89: Versace Atelier dress by special order from Versace boutiques worldwide.
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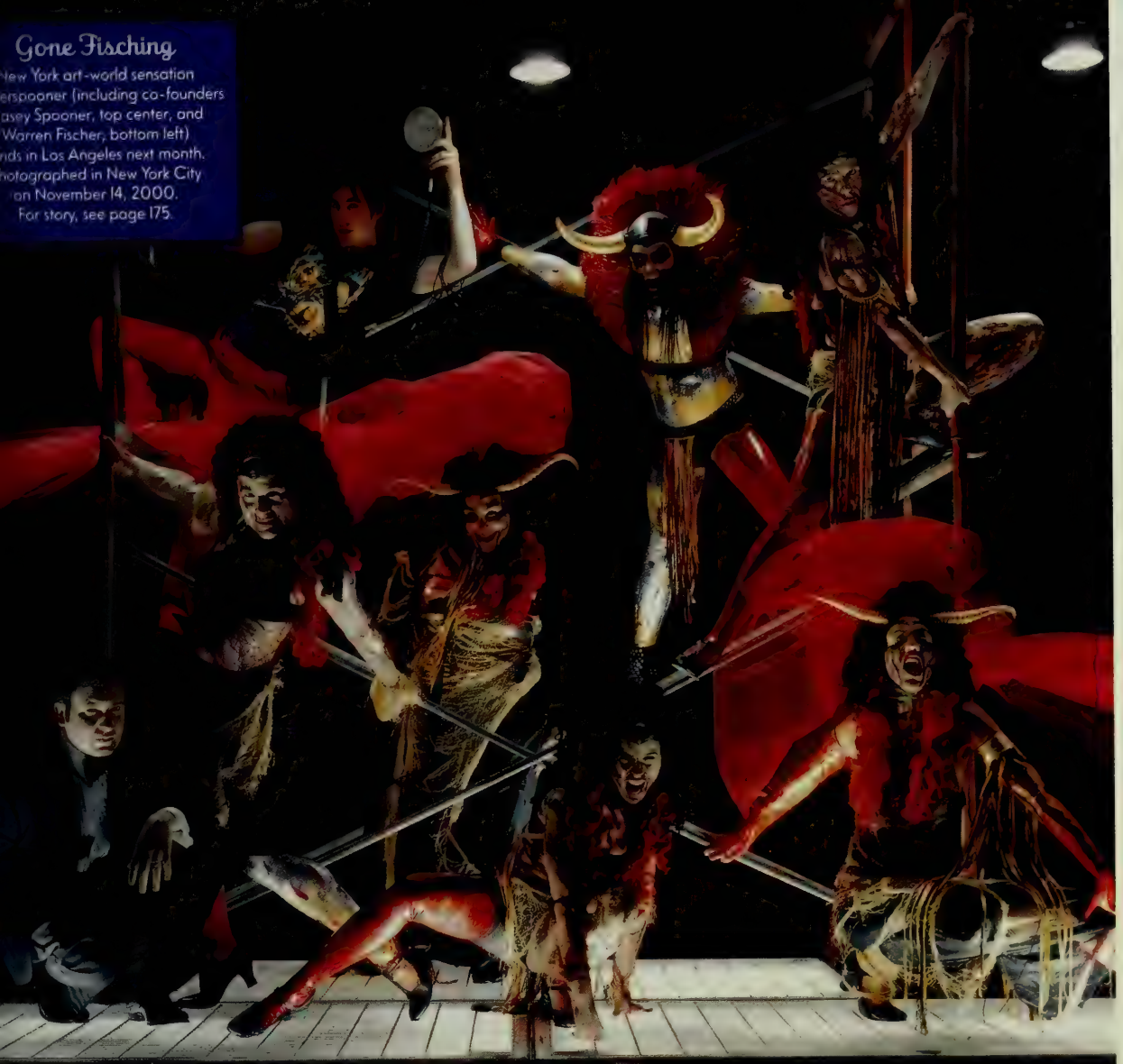
FANFAIR

31 Days in the Life of the Culture

January 2001

Gone Fishing

New York art-world sensation Kerspooner (including co-founders Casey Spooner, top center, and Warren Fischer, bottom left) ands in Los Angeles next month. Photographed in New York City on November 14, 2000. For story, see page 175.



HOT REELS: CHRIS MITCHELL on Ed Harris's *Pollock* and David Mamet's *State and Main*

WALTER KIRN sizes up Sandra Bullock in *Miss Congeniality*

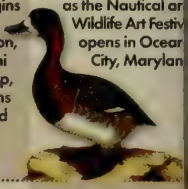
RONIN RO on hip-hop whiz Xzibit • MICHAEL HOGAN on Kent Nagano, master of the baton

A. M. HOMES on Tierney Gearon's eccentric family album • PLUS: ELISSA SCHAPPELL'S Hot Type

PHOTOGRAPH BY TODD EBERLE

January

KEN BURNS DOES JAZZ, FASHION COMES TO LOS ANGELES, AND HIP-HOP BOWS AT CARNEGIE HALL

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	**1** New Year's Day. The 112th Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, California. (This year's grand marshal is Tom Brokaw.) Theme: The Fabric of America.	**2** 	**3** The college football season comes to a close with the NCAA national championship FedEx Orange Bowl game in Miami.	**4** Nautical enthusiasts set sail for the San Diego Boat Show, one of the largest on the West Coast, which runs through the 7th. 	**5** The Seattle Chamber Music Society presents its third annual Winter Interlude, a three-day concert series at Benaroya Hall.	**6** New Yorkers can enjoy two ends of the photography spectrum—from elegant nudes to gri nudes—as Howard Schatz shows at the Sephora store in Rockefeller Center and Nan Goldin opens at the Matthe Marks Gallery.
7 Baseball stars such as Ken Griffey Jr. and Mike Piazza take turns beating the tar out of a softball for charity at the Pepsi All-Star Softball Game in Cathedral City, California. 	**8** Ken Burns's epic documentary series *Jazz*, the final installment of his trilogy on American life, begins tonight on PBS.	**9** Total lunar eclipse—a fitting backdrop for the Manhattan Theatre Club's previews of *Time and Again*, a musical based on Jack Finney's novel about a time-traveling advertising illustrator.	**10** The Joyce Theater presents the "Altogether Different" dance series, featuring avant-garde programs from Karole Armitage, Irene Hultman, and the Wally Cardona Quartet. 	**11** The Marlborough Gallery unveils new work by renowned British sculptor Sir Anthony Caro.	**12** Fashionistas can get their fix on both coasts as Los Angeles Fashion Week begins and "Paris to Providence: Fashion, Art and the Tirocchi Dressmaker's Shop, 1915–1947" opens at the Rhode Island School of Design Museum of Art.	**13** Aficionados of duck paintings will be ecstatic this weeken as the Nautical ar Wildlife Art Festiv opens in Ocear City, Marylan 
14 Paying homage to one of the finer aspects of filmmaking, the second annual Golden Trailer Awards, including the prestigious Saul Bass Award for Best Title Sequence, are held tonight in New York. 	**15** Martin Luther King Jr. Day.	**16** The I. M. Pei–designed M.I.T. List Visual Arts Center in Cambridge, Massachusetts, kicks off the new year with the interior-architecture exhibition "Inside Space: Experiments in Redefining Rooms."	**17** Chassis on the Chesapeake: the Motor Trend International Auto Show begins today in Baltimore. 	**18** Indie filmmakers in search of praise and distribution deals descend on Park City, Utah, for the 17th annual Sundance Film Festival, which runs through the 28th. 	**19** Rapper and former Fugee Wyclef Jean becomes the first hip-hop artist to headline at Carnegie Hall, in a benefit for his Wyclef Jean Foundation. Jean surveys musical eras from the 1930s to the present day.	**20** Inauguration Day. The Make-a-Wish Foundation holds its Bowl-A-Thon fund-raising event ir Pacifica, California. 
21 As the academy is bound to overlook his Grinch tour de force, Jim Carrey looks to make it three for three at the Golden Globes, which take place tonight. 	**22** The San Jose Museum of Art holds its retrospective of Mexican-American painter Carmen Lomas Garza.	**23** *Cellini*, John Patrick Shanley's play about the egomaniacal Florentine sculptor, begins previews at the Second Stage in New York, and Eliot Feld premieres a new work at the New York City Ballet.	**24** Chinese New Year. The Snake takes charge. 	**25** The Morgan Library presents two exhibitions: "The World Observed" and "Jean Poyet: Artist to the Court of Renaissance France."	**26** "Gauguin's 'Nirvana': Painters at Le Pouldu, 1889–90," an exhibition of work the painter produced while living in a small fishing village in Brittany, opens at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, Connecticut.	**27** Marking the 100th anniversary of Verdi's death, Vincent La Selva's New York Grand Opera Chorus and Orchestra perform the *Requiem* at Carnegie Hall.
28 CBS attempts to keep every single American glued to the TV tonight as it presents Super Bowl XXXV from Tampa, followed by the premiere of the second season of *Survivor*.	**29** "Alfred Stieglitz and Modern Art in America" opened yesterday at the National Gallery in Washington, D.C. 	**30** Two new banners are hoisted in front of the Met: "Photography: Processes, Preservation, and Conservation," which explores the photographic process, and "Modern Chinese Painting: Ellsworth Collection."	**31** The Gotham City Baroque Orchestra presents Vivaldi's *L'Estro Armonico* (Op. 3), a diverse collection of 12 concerti, at Columbia University's Casa Italiana.			

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Jackson Live

ED HARRIS MAKES A SPLASH IN *POLLOCK*

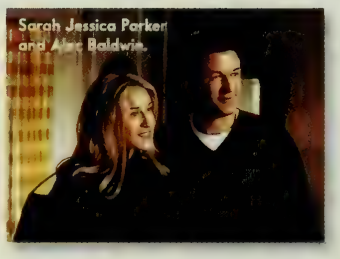
Every now and then, a movie born in Hollywood cries out, "Our blood may be phony, but our suffering is real." No subgenre communicates this lament more efficiently than the tortured-artist biopic, but until Ed Harris's *Pollock*—an especially exacting portrayal of crippled genius—no entry had struck on the P.B.&J. elegance of combining the roles of star and *auteur* in one and the same person.

That Harris gets away with such earnestness is a testament to his earnestness. It's hard to avert your eyes when a fine performer bets a decade on a project that requires him to blow out his waistline, paint like an original, and hold audiences breathless while he undertakes such pre-epiphany chores as clearing out an old farmhouse—and then its barn!

The period details from mid-20th-century America are magnetic, too. Because, though the arc of this tragedy serves merely to deposit blame with all those forces that bent Jackson Pollock inward—the media, his ego, a godless age, and particularly his savior/wife, Lee Krasner—the incontrovertible import of the opening scene's appliquéd cardigan is that this species of cult hero belongs to the past. Slyly then, Ed's baby raises a very good question: Where now does this culture express its need for the giants it once routinely unleashed upon the earth? **(Rating: ★★★)** —CHRIS MITCHELL

HOT REELS





Mamet Dearest

DAVID MAMET'S *STATE AND MAIN*

One day our grandkids will happen on *State and Main* and be astonished that anybody who lived at the turn of the century was so wicked smart. They'll be as much within their rights to marvel at David Mamet's latest as we are to expect better target selection from the Pulitzer-certified writer-director. I mean, a send-up of the movie biz? *Toy Story 2* can advance that dialectic without any adult assistance.

Nevertheless, when a swarm of West Coast cynics descends on a Vermont hamlet to hatch a three-hankie movie, the result is crackling dialogue and whiplash pacing that make worthy tribute to Mamet idol Preston Sturges, who mastered the comic assault on Hollywood hypocrisies way back in the 1940s. While William H. Macy, Alec Baldwin, Sarah Jessica Parker, and David Paymer all turn in conspicuously professional ensemble performances, the sniggering heart of the film is held by an aw-shucks romance between Rebecca Pidgeon as a brainiac village darling and the irrepressible Philip Seymour Hoffman as the only character in the whole pageant with fully functioning nerve endings. Succumb to conventions at your own risk, though. When Mamet drops you through a trapdoor, you don't easily forget it. **(Rating: ★★★)** —C.M.



Sandra Bullock in *Miss Congeniality.*

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Trailer of the month: *Miss Congeniality.* **Directed by:** Donald Petrie. **Starring:** Sandra Bullock, Benjamin Bratt, Michael Caine, Candice Bergen. **Coming to a theater near you:** December 22. **The long and short of it:** Tomboy F.B.I. agent (Bullock) must go undercover as beauty-pageant contestant in order to foil terrorist bomb plot. Serial fashion emergencies ensue as Bullock takes crash course in hair and makeup and learns to stop cleaning her ears with pinkie finger. **Target audience:** Easily amused young women and the boyfriends and husbands who can't say no to them. **Inspired by:** *Pretty Woman* (Cinderella story line); *Beverly Hills Cop* (fish-out-of-water theme). **Supporting performances:** William Shatner slips into Priceline mode as silver-haired pageant M.C. Michael Caine emphasizes fruity accent as Bullock's exasperated beauty coach. Benjamin Bratt exploits male-model cheekbones as Bullock's love interest and fellow G-man. Candice Bergen wears power suits and hair spray as throaty Candice Bergen type. **Suspension-of-disbelief factor:** High. Audience is expected to feign surprise at Bullock's by-the-numbers transformation from homely, hawkin'-and-spittin' good old gal into take-your-breath-away fashion plate. **Requisite promotional voice-over:** "Get ready for the new face of the F.B.I." **(Rating: ★★★)** —WALTER KIRN





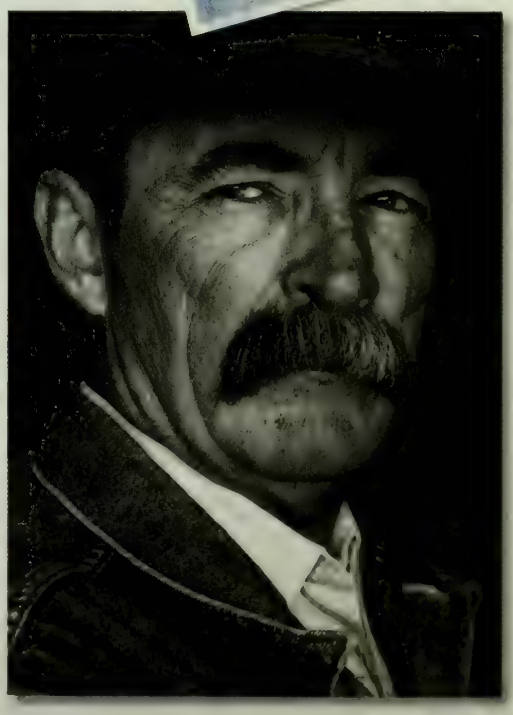
HOT TYPE

ELISSA SCHAPPELL

Here, she said. Read Ray's book. It's good. *Call If You Need Me* (Vintage) gathers up **Raymond Carver's** uncollected prose—both fiction and nonfiction—including five newly discovered stories. Take it, she said. Damn it, just take it.

Also this month: Ned Kelly, thief, murderer, and one of Australia's most legendary figures, rises to bushwhack another day in **Peter Carey's** novel *True History of the Kelly Gang* (Knopf). From Orwell to Rushdie, **Christopher Hitchens's** *Unacknowledged Legislation* (Verso) limns the powerful dialectic between literature and politics. Observe how the great modernist architect *Richard Neutra* (Taschen), the prince of plate glass, introduced California to cool, sleek, modern style. In *Outsmart Your Broker.com* (Simon & Schuster), financial guru **Christopher Byron** explains how you can make a million without ever leaving your bed. *Lisa Yuskavage* (ICA), with text by **Katy Siegel,** is an unforgettable monograph featuring the painter's colorful, gauzy portraits of perversely proportioned women. Damaged marriages, abandoned hopes, and the betrayal of expectations—sounds as if **Ann Beattie,** one of America's finest masters of the short story, is back in high form with *Perfect Recall* (Scribner). An insomniac single mother falls under the sway of a visionary sleep researcher in **Robert Cohen's** *Inspired Sleep* (Scribner). **David Standish's** *The Art of Money* (Chronicle) illustrates how a nation's currency reflects its true character—so, what do white men in wigs bespeak? Jason knows books: **Jason Epstein,** former editorial director of Random House and co-founder of *The New York Review of Books,* foretells the crisis facing the *Book Business* (Norton). A tale of love and rockets, **Deborah Copaken Kogan's** *Shutterbabe* (Villard) delivers reports from the front lines of war zones. Photographer **Kurt Markus's** sumptuous, man-size *Cowpuncher* (Wild Horse Island Press) exalts ranch life in the Southwest. From *Some Like It Hot* to *Forbidden Planet,* **Tony Nourmand** and **Graham Marsh** amass a staggering trove of *Film Posters of the 50s* (Overlook). If you can't afford a midlife crisis, **Keith Bluemel's** *Ferrari* (Sutton) will get you in gear. And finally: need to return a Hanukkah gift? Do you like Beck, Courtney Love, Lou Reed, or Joey Ramone? *Jews Who Rock* (St. Martin's) is **Guy Oseary's** homage to 100 of the top Jewish rockers of all time. Hey ho, let's go!







Clockwise from top left: promotional poster for the 1958 film *Mon Oncle;* the Kaufmann House, in Palm Springs, California, designed by Richard Neutra; money from around the world; Kirby Hickman, photographed at the WS Ranch in Cimarron, New Mexico, by Kurt Markus; the 1950 Lampredi-designed Ferrari.

Maestro at Bay

CONDUCTOR KENT NAGANO HEADS FOR THE HILLS



PACIFIC PRINCE Kent Nagano in Salzburg, Austria, 1998. (He was conducting Messiaen's *Saint François d'Assise*—the crow was St. Francis's favorite bird.)

Japanese-American conductor Kent Nagano, 49, has been a household name for nearly 10 years, but mainly in England, where he was music director of Manchester's Hallé Orchestra, and in France, where he led the Opéra de Lyon. Although Nagano, a Bay Area native, has served as music director of the Berkeley Symphony Orchestra since 1978, most Americans have had to catch him in guest appearances with local orchestras. Meanwhile, music-lovers everywhere devoured the mane-wearing maestro's remarkable recordings of such 20th-century operas as Benjamin Britten's *Billy Budd* and Olivier Messiaen's *Saint François d'Assise*. Nobody, it seems, can make the dissonant harmonies, complex orchestrations, and shifting time signatures of this music sound better than Kent Nagano, who has enjoyed close friendships with composers as diverse as Messiaen and Frank Zappa.

Nagano's overdue homecoming began in September, when Plácido Domingo, newly installed as artistic director of the Los Angeles Opera, appointed him principal conductor. (At about the same time, Nagano reinforced his roots in Europe, accepting a post as music director of Berlin's Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester.) This month, he will conduct the American premiere of *El Niño,* John Adams's new opera, with the San Francisco Symphony. Nagano is no stranger to Adams's work, having conducted performances of the composer's 1987 opera, *Nixon in China,* all over the world and recorded several of his works for Nonesuch records.

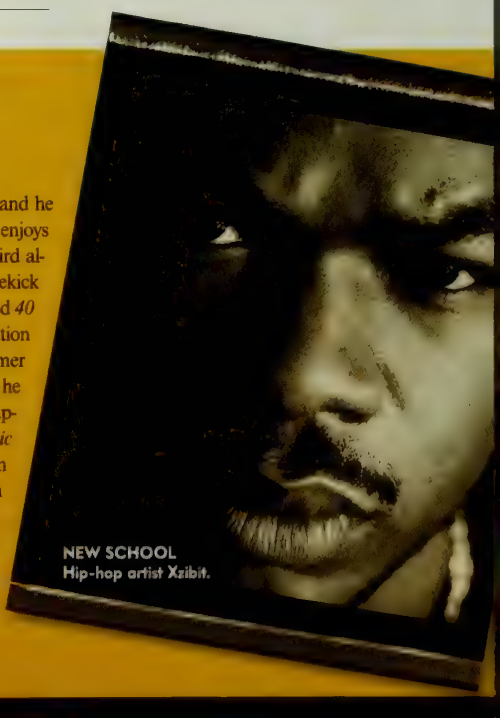
"It's a telling of the story of the birth of Christ," Nagano says of *El Niño,* "that is very different from, say, the telling as we know it in Handel's *Messiah.* There's not just one single Mary, one single Joseph—the characters are described in a more abstract way. It's not all that often that you get to do something so important in your own city." —MICHAEL HOGAN

PHOTOGRAPH BY SNOWDON

The Story of X

L.A. RAPPER XZIBIT GETS *RESTLESS*

Ask Xzibit about music magazines' calling him "the next great hip-hop savior" and he laughs. "I see this and I'm like, 'What happened? What the hell is going on?'" While he enjoys the attention, the 26-year-old rapper notes that *Restless,* which was just released, is his third album. In fact, Xzibit (born Alvin Nathaniel Joiner) has been on wax since 1994, first as sidekick to the L.A. rap group Tha Alkaholiks, then on his solo projects, *At the Speed of Life* (1996) and *40 Dayz & 40 Nightz* (1998). But when his record label, Loud, entered into a lengthy distribution deal, his career was put on hold—a setback which served only as motivation for the former Melrose Avenue store clerk. After an appearance on Snoop Dogg's radio hit "B Please," he earned a spot on Dr. Dre's national 41-city "Up in Smoke" tour, where many felt he upstaged Dre's protégé Eminem. He was also a fierce presence on Dre's best-selling *Chronic 2001* album. "Then Dre went from agreeing to produce just two songs for my next album to serving as executive producer for the whole album," Xzibit explains. *Restless* is filled with engaging funk tracks and finds Xzibit working with everyone from Erick Sermon (of EPMD) to DJ Quik, Battlecat, Eminem, and Tha Alkaholiks. While Xzibit's style is undeniably hard-core, *Restless* moves past gang-related themes and could herald a new era for West Coast rap. "It's not just one or two good songs and a lot of filler," says Xzibit. "It's good from start to finish … a new category of L.A. rap." —RONIN RO



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Last week, in Albany, NY, dozens o Protestants were forced from thei church at gunpoint by local authorities. Three ministers and 2 others were executed and buried ir a mass grave a few miles west of town. Thousands more were force to abandon their homes and leav the state or risk execution.

This didn't happen in Albany. Or Chicago. Or Tucson. But what if it did? How would you feel? What would you do? Horrible acts against human rights are committed all over the world every day. This one actually happened in East Timor in 1999 to 26 people including women, children and three Catholic priests. They were seeking sanctuary in their church from anti-independence militia units organized by the Indonesian military. Tens of thousands who fled the region to save their lives remain trapped in refugee camps.

What can you do to help? Write a letter. Write an e-mail. Write a check. Become one of Amnesty International's one million members today. As a member, you'll put pressure on human rights violators a help us bring them to justice. And you'll kept informed of these abuses where they occur. Human rights violations happen anytime, anywhere – even h But by joining Amnesty International n you can help keep incidents like the on East Timor from happening anywhere the world, ever again.

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Family Affair

PHOTOGRAPHER TIERNEY GEARON GLIMPSES CHILDHOOD'S MYSTERY

Tierney Gearon is in search of herself. A constant traveler, she wanders the world, using her camera to explore her past, her self, her future. "I Am a Camera," a high-profile group exhibition opening at London's Saatchi Gallery this month, will feature Gearon's off-kilter photographs of her children and family. Her images have the offhandedness of holiday snapshots infused with a mesmerizing twist. In one, her son Michael, five, gleefully swings an oversize doll through the snow. The white-on-white echo of the doll's nightgown against the fresh powder and the chalets of Gstaad is at once spontaneous and subtly demented. "I'm just trying to give people a taste of what my life is like," Gearon says from her father's house on St. Barts. "I have a very kind of mad life.... I never feel like I belong anywhere.... I have a rich gypsy lifestyle." An Atlanta native, Gearon, 37, had a privileged if peculiar upbringing. Discovered by a European modeling agency while studying ballet in Utah, she relocated to London and married a Frenchman whom she has since divorced. The birth of her two children and the dissolution of her marriage prompted Gearon's interest not only in documenting her children's lives but also in exploring her own past. It is the simultaneous familiarity and deeply personal nature of Gearon's work, the voyeuristic allure of witnessing the charmed life gone slightly awry, the private made public, that hooks the viewer's eye, making us want to see more, to know more.—A. M. HOMES



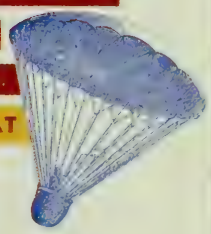




ALL MY CHILDREN Photographs by Tierney Gearon, *counterclockwise from above: Gstaad, February 2000, Dallas, April 2000, and Mohawk, N.Y., October 1998.*

New Concept Garden (Cekalusa 61), where Richard Holbrooke dines when in **Sarajevo,** has a lending library in its bathroom.... Fusion has landed in **Jakarta,** on the downstairs menu at Cinnabar (Jalan Imam Bonjol 76–78).... **Rome's** Caffè Cassamortaro—literally "Coffin-Maker Cafe"—got its name from the funeral home next door (Via Flaminia Vecchio 515).

WORLD BEAT



The Loving Spoonful

PERFORMANCE ARTISTS FISCHERSPOONER LADLE OUT SURPRISE

As pop sensations go, Fischerspooner stands out as one of the more bizarre. Immersed in the trappings of 80s kitsch, prop stylist Casey Spooner and commercial director Warren Fischer have come up with a highly contrived song-and-dance spectacular that challenges conventional description. Part Paula Abdul, part *Star Trek,* with a touch of *Bedazzled* and Busby Berkeley, the duo—along with a consort of dancers, makeup artists, and trunks full of fancy dress—have wooed New York audiences with deliberately disordered performances that celebrate the clichés of prefabricated entertainment. Born two years ago in an East Village Starbucks, FS has evolved into an art-fashion phenomenon, thanks in part to Gavin Brown, in whose West 15th Street gallery-cum-bar they periodically perform. "There isn't an aesthetic or intellectual agenda," says Spooner. "It's just the opportunity to fetishize anything that excites us by indulging in it, smart or not." In early February the pair will take their show to Los Angeles for a several-night engagement in a disused downtown bank building that will become André Balazs's new Standard hotel. Co-produced by curator Yvonne Force, FS plans to invoke the baroque fireworks-and-mythology displays of 18th-century Europe. "We'll be exploring the ideas of violence, splendor, and spectacle," says Fischer. "It's going to be by far the most elaborate show we've ever staged." —EDWARD HELMORE



SPOONERISMS Fischerspooner cast members: choreographer Jordana Toback, above, and co-founder Casey Spooner.

Michael Lutin tells Capricorns to count their blessings for a change



Cindy Sherman

CAPRICORN DEC. 22–JAN. 19

If you can drag yourself away from staring anxiously at the mirror and take a moment to look around, you will see what a good life you actually have. Venus, Jupiter, and Mars are having a pleasant effect on you now. Surrounding yourself with luxury items, good friends, and even religious artifacts may not take away *all* the misery Capricorns are so fond of steeping themselves in, but it can certainly help to ease some of the emotional pain. And if you can spend a few hours performing some enjoyable work that will keep you off the streets, so much the better.



Justin Timberlake

AQUARIUS JAN. 20–FEB. 18

It's always a blessing to have Venus transit your sign, even if it's for only three weeks. And when Mars makes a trine from your solar 9th house at the same time, you have a cosmic and divine right to feel beautiful again, despite the fact that during some of your darker moments you may feel as if you've got no more than five good minutes left on earth. Because you were born, have been bred, and will die a social being, accept the fact that until your last breath you are going to be singing and dancing for the troops. Exhausting? Maybe, but, baby, that's your Karma.



Mia Hamm

PISCES FEB. 19–MARCH 20

Although the Chiron-Pluto transit in your midheaven is pounding the living daylights out of you (especially if you were born in early March) and crushing you under the cruel thumbs of doctors, dentists, lawyers, and chief executive officers, the mitigating effects of Venus and Jupiter give you enough of a break, once in a while, to crawl away and catch your breath. No matter how tough the going gets, you've got to maintain your inner strength and pray that miracles didn't stop happening the week after the Bible was published. You deserve one, don't you?



Al Green

ARIES MARCH 21–APRIL 19

Get down on your knees and thank both God and Venus for the many wonderful individuals who are rallying around you now that you need them. The career you thought you had completely sewn up seems to have taken all you were worth and not given back a damned thing, so perhaps it would be wise to turn your back on the drains of politics and business and start celebrating the people who have really kept you alive these past months. That takes wisdom. Luckily, Pluto can provide you with the kind that comes with maturity. But first you're going to have to grow up.



Tony Hawk

TAURUS APRIL 20–MAY 20

When your ruling planet culminates in your solar chart, you have to get out in public and show everyone that no matter how tired or beaten down you may be feeling inside you've still got the spirit and courage to make it in this world. And you're not pushing yourself like this just for the money, either, although that is a factor. You're fighting instead to prove your relevance in a youth-crazed, techno-obsessed, dehumanized culture. Wouldn't it be nice to go back to the days when men were men and women were women? Well, you can kiss that dream good-bye.



Pauline Kael

GEMINI MAY 21–JUNE 21

Keep your eyes on the light and continue to pray, even if the cynical little goblin inside your head is madly trying to convince you that it won't do any good. You are experiencing Saturn's final retrograde in your 12th house, one of the most challenging astrological aspects imaginable. Although those who would like to do you in appear to have the upper hand, there are at least four other planets providing you with an excellent support system. If you're bent on self-destruction, however, even the angels will have a tough time pulling you out of this one.



Gisele Bundchen

CANCER JUNE 22–JU

Enormous pressure at work, profound concerns for their h and complicated financial and partnership issues are making many C wonder why their ancestors ever crawled out of the sea in the first plac trologers call the planetary lineup that is currently affecting you a fin God, and in view of what you've been going through, it may seem as t Heaven really has been giving you the finger. Actually, though, this about the evolution of consciousness. The good news: while this proc going on, wild sex is the best medicine.



Emily Brontë

LEO JULY 23–AUG. 22

As absorbing as working late or working out can be, in your enlightened moments you must be aware that there are some little people ing around who need your special brand of nurturing. And speak personal needs, during those same instants of clarity you've got to see more than ever, you too crave the kinds of love and attention in yo that have nothing to do with career or reputation or public adulation. ask for it, though, they'll know you need it. And if they know you ne you won't be in control. Then what?



Adam Sandler

VIRGO AUG. 23–SEPT

History has shown that from a very young age many Virgos ar dened with the responsibility of cheering up relatives and keeping the from shattering. Rich or poor, it is usually pretty much the same soap full of hurts and separations, grievances and grudges, all dotted with holiday meals. Maybe it's because of your childhood conditioning, cause Jupiter is culminating at the top of your solar chart, but you have to go on creating an artificial image of familial normalcy. A little but noble nonetheless.



Eminem

LIBRA SEPT. 23–OCT. 23

The appropriate expression of anger is often difficult for members of your sign. When dealing with those on whom you are emotionally d dent, you often substitute a painful smile for the nuclear rage you are ac feeling, choosing instead to scream at the poor lady at the bank or th in the grocery store. With Mars in your sign, the sun in your house of munication, and your planetary ruler in the solar 5th house, it should b ier to speak from your heart and say what you mean. For the sake people at the bank and the grocery store, let's hope so.



Meg Ryan

SCORPIO OCT. 24–NO

It's a little sad when great artists are reduced to sullying them over issues of financial compensation, but when oppositions occur in th and 8th houses and you need backing to implement your master pla world domination, you may feel that you have to choose between re-cr yourself in an image palatable to the masses and retiring to the farm to potatoes. The trick, though, is to hold on to creative integrity while resh people's taste (without their knowing it). P.S.: Mars in your 12th house i news, so try to remain spiritual while hawking your wares.



Noël Coward

SAGITTARIUS NOV. 22–DEC. 21

Before you alienate every ally you have, it might be wise to print up the following message on little cards and distribute them to everyo your life: "Dear Co-workers, Loved Ones, and Friends: If you think I ha cently been seductive but rejecting toward you, your perceptions are co It is not, however, out of malice that I am behaving this way. Please u stand that with Jupiter in my 7th house I desperately need you arou buoy me up, but with Pluto and Chiron in Sadge at the same time, I'm to death of all of you."

To hear more about what's happening in your horoscope—and everyone else's—listen to Michael Lutin weekly by calling 1-900-28V-FAIR on a Touch-Tone phone. Cost: $1.95 per minute. If you are under 18, you need parental permission.



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MITCH MILLER

While Mitch Miller is bound up in the story of 20th-century music–he played the oboe in the original 1935 *Porgy and Bess* and the infamous *War of the Worlds* broadcast, and produced Frank Sinatra, Charlie Parker, and Mahalia Jackson–he is also known for l politics, opposing early rock 'n' roll (to the detriment of his own career) on the grounds that it exploited black artists and leading thousands in song to protest Vietnam At 89, Miller shows why the world has always liked to "Sing Along with Mitch"



What is your greatest fear?
Dying.

What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?
I expect everyone to try harder.

What is the trait you most deplore in others?
Pompous satisfaction with the mediocre and the mundane.

What is your greatest extravagance?
True four-star restaurants—no trendies.

What is your favorite journey?
From backstage to the podium.

What do you consider the most overrated virtue?
Honesty.

What do you dislike most about your appearance?
My bull neck–and my slight potbelly.

Which living person do you most despise?
Anyone who opposes federal funding of the arts.

Which words or phrases do you most overuse?
Sensational. Great. Marvelous.

What or who is the greatest love of your life?
Music.

Who is your favorite hero of fiction?
Sydney Carton.

What do you consider your greatest achievement?
Discovering talent in others and nurturing it to fruition.

What is your most treasured possession?
My family and my friends.

What do you regard as the lowest depth of misery?
The U.S.A. not truly funding the National Endowment for the Arts. Sixty cents per citizen—ha!

Where would you like to live?
Anyplace where the arts thrive and the air is clean.

Who are your favorite writers?
Dickens, Hardy.

Who are your heroes in real life?
Pablo Casals; Franklin D. Roosevelt; Israel, the country.

How would you like to die?
While making love.

What is your motto?
"Nothing in moderation."

What is it that you most dislike?
The prattling of politicians. Most boards of arts and nonprofit organizations.

What is your greatest regret?
That I didn't spend more time with my family when we were young.

If you were to die and come back as a person or thing, what do you think it would be?
If I could choose to come back as a person it would be Johann Sebastian Bach.

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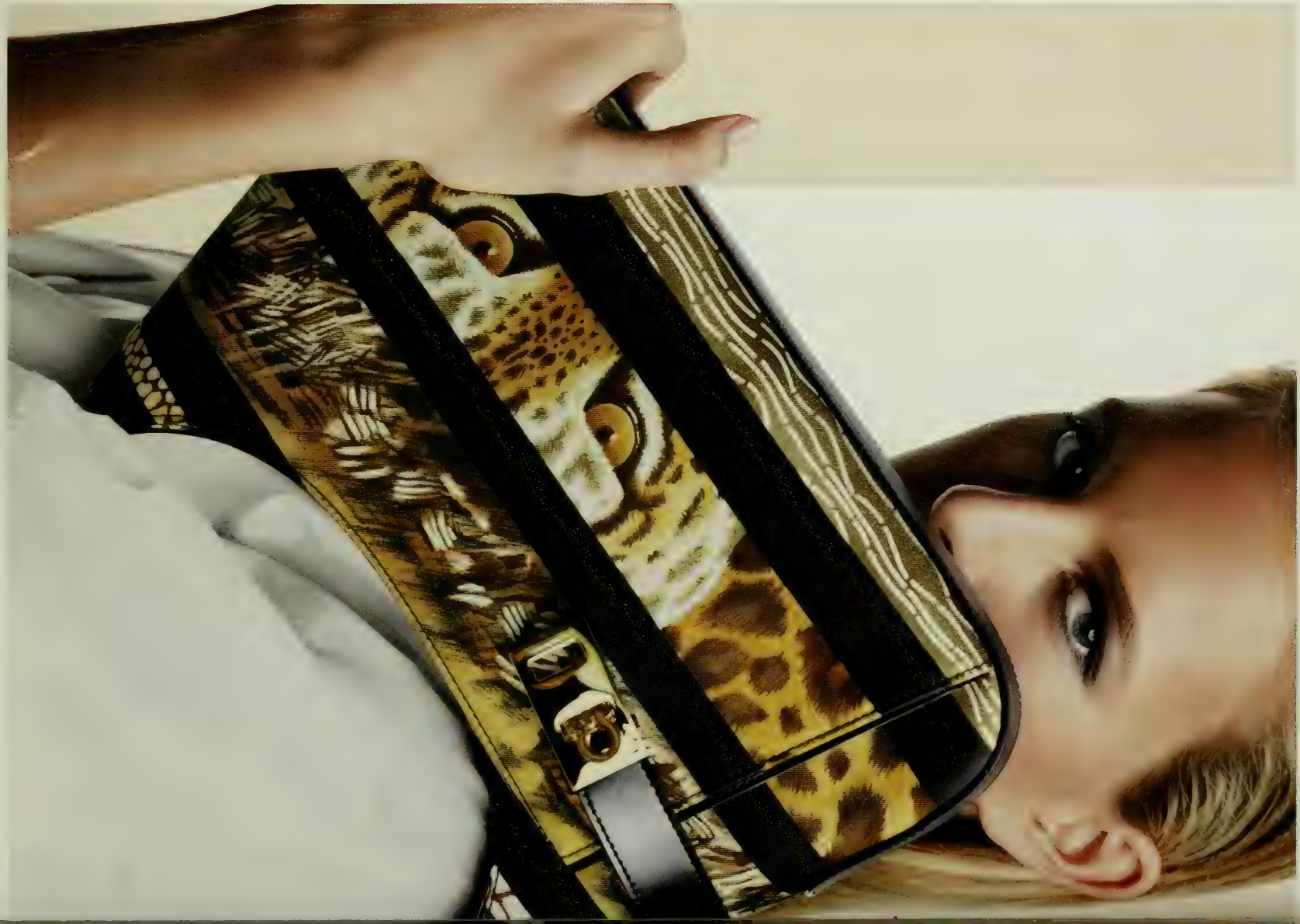
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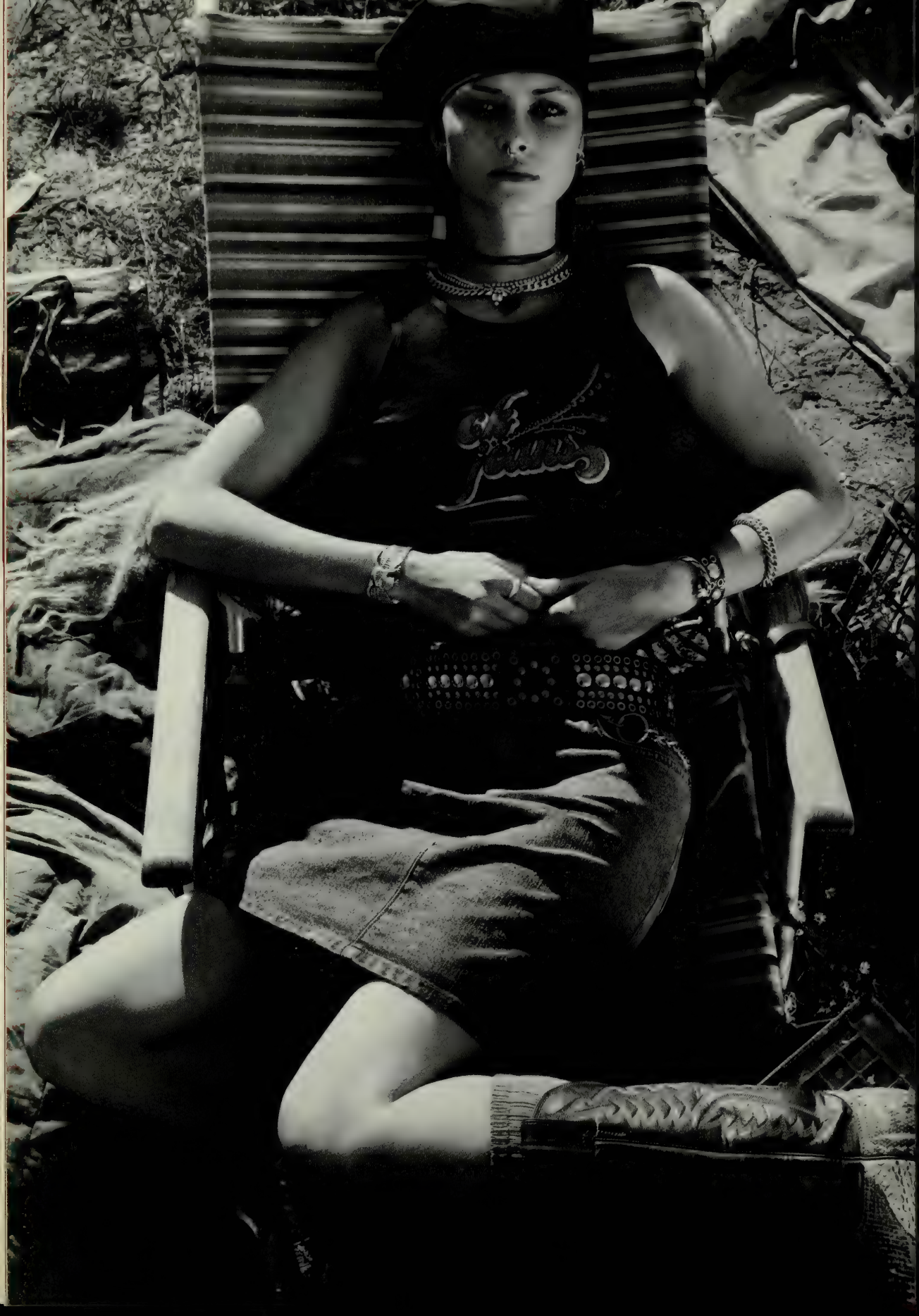
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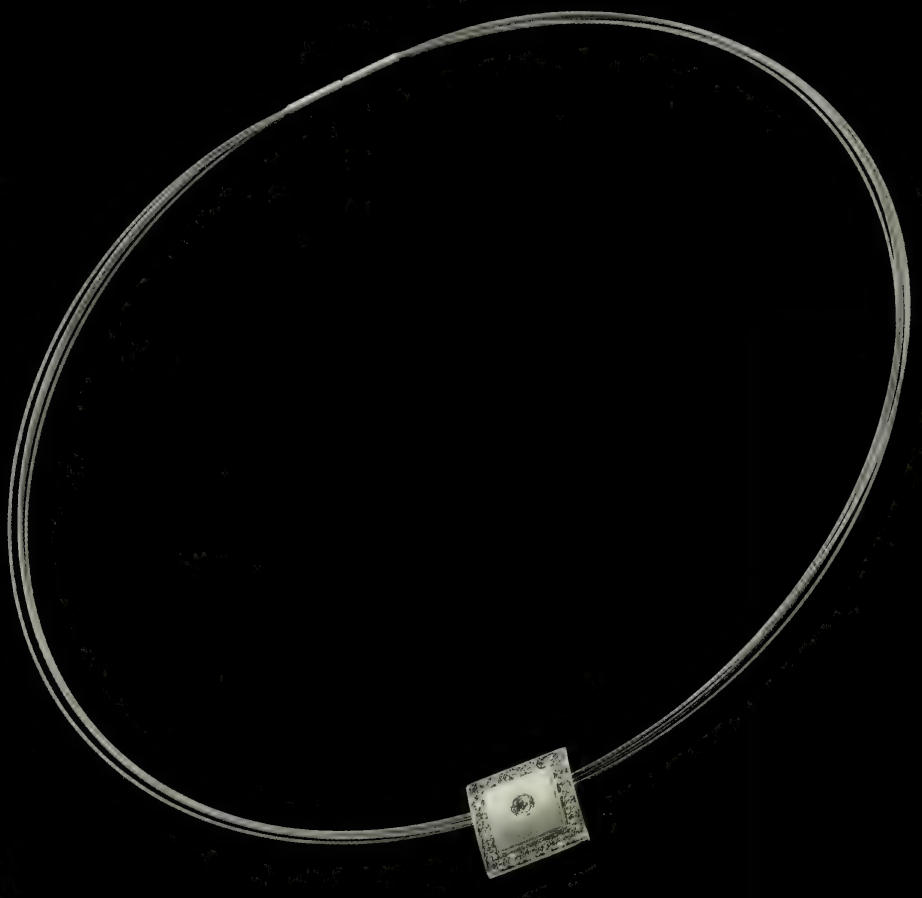


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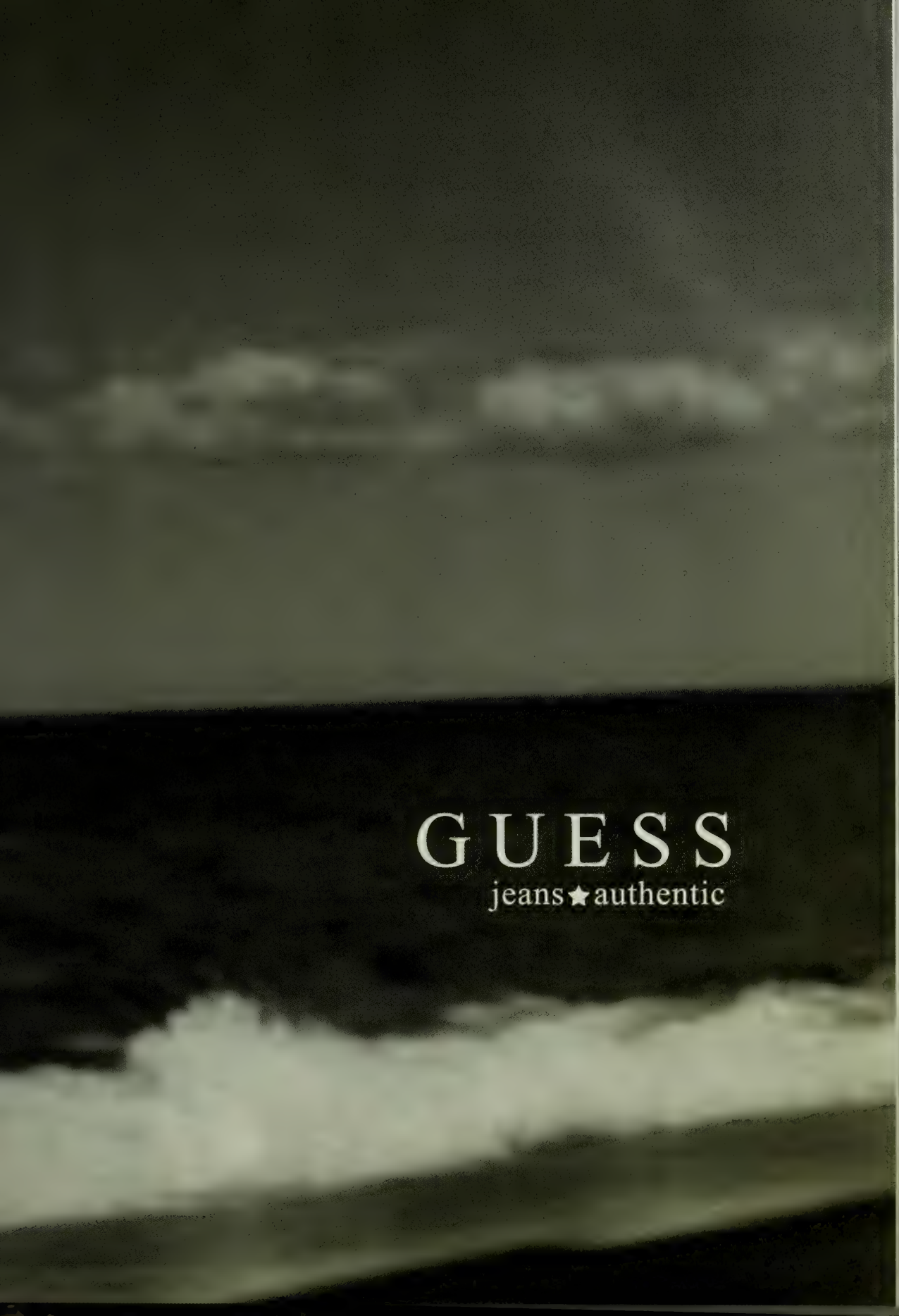
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Features

KEANU, FROM BOTH SIDES NOW
Keanu Reeves inspires both cultish devotion and militant animosity. But with three upcoming films and two planned *Matrix* sequels, Reeves is Zen-like about it all—the extreme reactions he provokes, his erratic past, and his ongoing search for love. Ned Zeman tracks the $15 million star and his band to Henderson, Nevada. Photographs by Mario Testino 108

IN THE KINGDOM OF BIG SUGAR
For over a decade, attorney Edward Tuddenham has been waging a legal war against South Florida sugar barons Pepe and Alfy Fanjul. Marie Brenner investigates Tuddenham's charge that thousands of migrant cane harvesters were forced into "modern-day slavery," and hears the Fanjuls' implacable defense. Photographs by Justine Parsons 114

THE PERILS OF PAULA When British TV personality Paula Yates left her husband, Bob Geldof, the venerated founder of Live Aid, in 1995 for INXS singer Michael Hutchence, she knocked even Princess Diana off the front pages. After Hutchence's alleged suicide in 1997 and Yates's death by heroin overdose last year, Steven Daly wonders if Britain's vicious tabloid culture dealt its fading starlet a fatal blow 122

ACT TWO In an excerpt from his new biography of Moss Hart, Steven Bach charts the playwright-director's friendship with the exasperating critic Alexander Woollcott, which sparked *The Man Who Came to Dinner,* and his surprising marriage to Kitty Carlisle, who helped turn his floundering production of Lerner and Loewe's *My Fair Lady* into a triumph for the ages 128

CALL OF THE WILD Is Lara Flynn Boyle as tough as the D.A. she plays on ABC's *The Practice*? With Hollywood's designated Bad Girl starring in the new Bill Murray comedy, Kevin Sessums finds out which rules Boyle has broken and how she hooked up with the ultimate L.A. rebel, Jack Nicholson. Photographs by David LaChapelle 140

ALMODÓVAR UP, ALMODÓVAR DOWN
Veering between gregarious performance and solitary self-protection, Pedro Almodóvar—director of the Oscar-winning *All About My Mother* and the forthcoming *Bad Education*—is as complicated as his movies. In the heart of Madrid society, Colm Tóibín discovers a key to the Almodóvar mystery. Photographs by Bruce Weber 144

Fanfair

28 DAYS IN THE LIFE OF THE CULTURE
Heist society—director Guy Ritchie tackles diamond thieves in *Snatch.* Hot Reels: Bruce Handy's reviews of *Snatch* and Sean Penn's *The Pledge;* Coming Attractions—Walter Kirn's taste of *Hannibal.* Elissa Schappell's Hot Type. Lisa Robinson's Hot Tracks 63

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MAGNIFICENT VOYAGE With Natasha Richardson playing World War II heroine Ruth Gruber in a CBS mini-series, Maureen Orth profiles the 89-year-old journalist, who in 1944 brought 1,000 Holocaust refugees to America aboard a U.S. military ship—a journey that changed Gruber's life forever 8

BLAST FROM THE PAST The mushroom cloud is back. With two recent Cold War TV movies, the Broadway hit *Copenhagen,* and now the Kevin Costner feature *Thirteen Days,* about the Cuban missile crisis, Bruce Handy spots a sneaking nostalgia for that old-time A-bomb glamour 9

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SONG OF SOSSAMON Common Grounds—Henry Alford's unified field theory; Nan Darien fund-raises among the dot-commers; Intelligence Report: back-to-school special; Neil Diamond gives George Wayne a clinic in cool; Frank Black attack; Out & In—bothersome pizza. . . . 9

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THERE IS A KEY to leading a balanced life, and it does not always lie in the middle of the road.

Balance, you see, is an endgame thing. An Aggregate Sum, to use a banking term. (We apologize and now return to your regularly scheduled language.)

Spend a little too much here, save a little more there. It's okay, as long as the big picture is still straight.

The point is, you can lead a perfectly well-balanced life without constantly feeling deprived.

A balanced, happy life is not about a rigid marriage to the concept of Moderation, but a more flexible, open relationship with it.

One that lets you see other concepts like Spontaneity and Self-Reward.

We're not talking about neglecting your child's college education or your long-term obligations.

We're talking about LETTING YOURSELF GO every once in a while, grounded by the fact that you have a secure long-term strategy.

Guided by things like free financial checkups with someone who will take the time to understand your priorities.

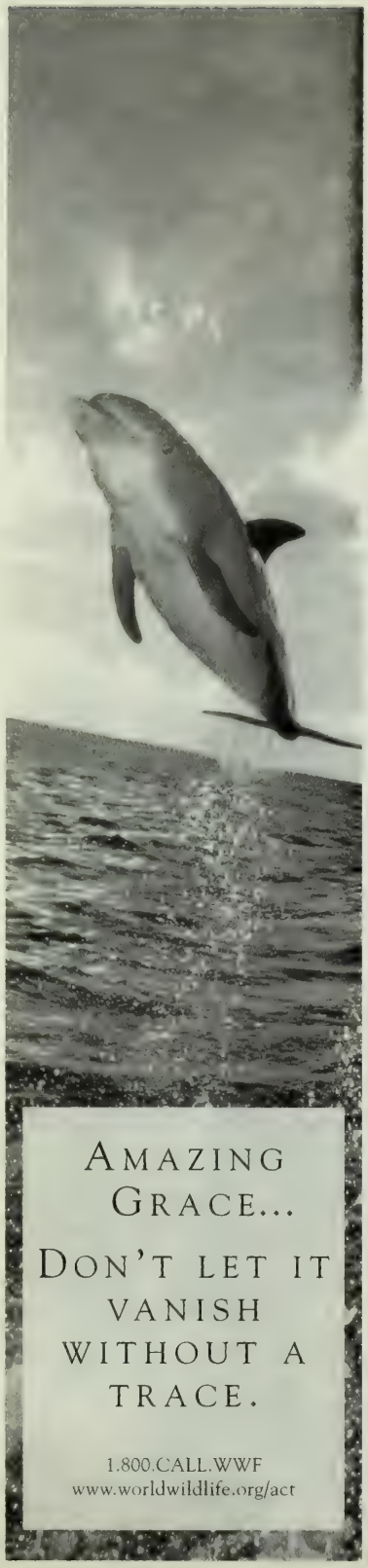
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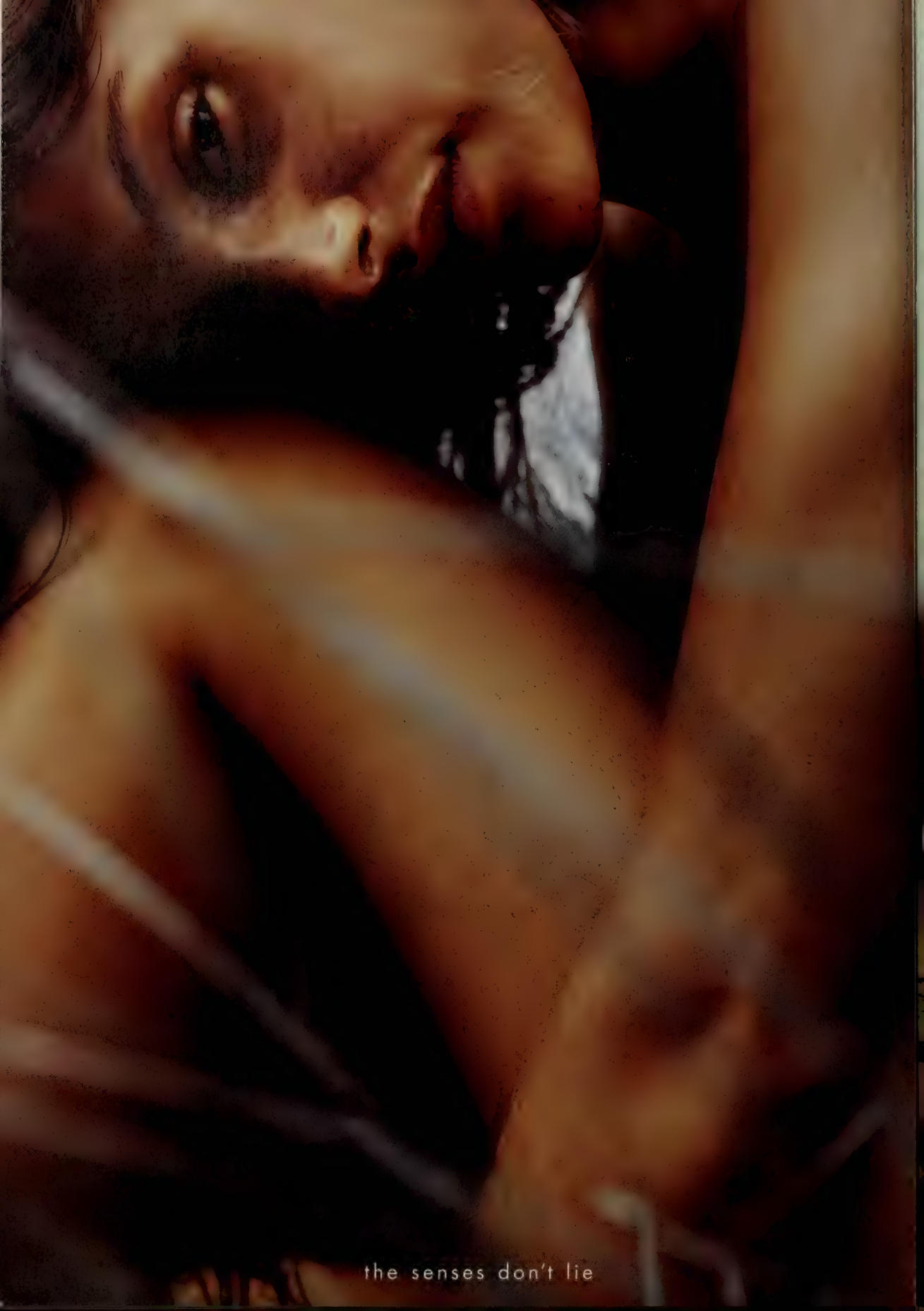
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Easy Does It



One of my sons received a comment on his most recent report card that I found strangely unsettling. The teacher, in his evaluation, denigrated my son's writing, saying that it was "too conversational." What an impossibly lame thought coming from someone hired to teach writing. Because, I will tell you, for my money good writing is by its very nature conversational. It's all part of the making-the-difficult-look-easy school of thought—a professional style I'm very much in favor of. A friend in California once told me of sitting in the auditorium during rehearsals for the Academy Awards. Fred Astaire was to receive a special Oscar that year, and for much of the rehearsal afternoon he practiced getting out of his seat and bounding up the stairs to the stage. The night of the ceremony, the audience saw only the result of his efforts: the most gifted dancer in the world gliding easily up to the podium to receive an award he richly deserved.

It's the same way with good w ing. A lot of hard work goes i making it look easy. This is a gen ization, but I always say that the re er's appreciation of something wri tends to be in inverse relation to ease with which the writer wrote Another generalization: people w say they love writing really don't d particularly well. The fact is, the act of weaving words together look as if they drifted effortlessly onto the page is tough work a certainly not for the faint of heart. Behind every well-crafted s tence is a broken writer, curled in a fetal position with the she pulled up around him, his mind a raging cauldron fired by a ieties about deadlines, bills, worthiness, weight gain, and a mill other things.

For a columnist, who traffics in opinion in addition to fact, s ting the whole thing in a conversational tone is not just an eleme of the job; it is its essence. *Vanity Fair*'s two columnists, Christop Hitchens and James Wolcott, both make it look effortless. A both come at it from very different directions. W cott, I know, sweats over every sentence. Each wo has been chosen with care—others were consider and rejected. Then the whole is polished over a over until he turns it in. The results, like his mast piece on television punditry which appears on pa 72, are evidence enough of his command.

Hitchens, God bless him, operates somewh differently. I remember a lunch at a local Fren restaurant years ago when I was editing anoth publication. I may have played with a glass of wi to be convivial. Hitchens had five good-size glass of red, followed by a couple of tumblers of scotch a palate cleanser.

I came back to the office on fumes; Hitche was completely unaffected by his intake. We sat hi down at a borrowed desk in front of an old electr typewriter and he banged out 1,500 words on son subject or other. And it was so beautifully written to make you want to cry.

There are few better at writing columns of opinio than Wolcott and Hitchens, but I can say here tha next month, they will be joined by a third peerles hand: Dominick Dunne. Beginning with the Marc issue, he will—in addition to his larger stories—b writing a bimonthly column based on his daily tra els, the stories he is told, and the cases he continue to worry over. And if anyone has redefined the a of conversational writing, it is Dunne. It could b said he is a master at it. —GRAYDON CARTE



ON THE COVER

Keanu Reeves wears a shirt and suit by Helmut Lang. Hair by Michael Boadi. Grooming by Val Garland. Props styled by Thomas Thurnauer. Photographed exclusively for *V.F.* by Mario Testino in Los Angeles on November 28, 2000.


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The first time contributing editor **Ned Zeman** saw Dogstar, Keanu Reeves's alternative-pop band, "it was about four or five years ago, and frankly they weren't very good." But after seeing them recently, for his profile on page 108, Zeman witnessed not only hundreds of screaming female fans vying for Reeves's attention but also a "professional band that was very respectable." Despite Reeves's movie/rock-star status, Zeman found the actor to have a "bit of a childlike quality. He always seems slightly mystified when people approach him. He knows *why* they're doing it. He just doesn't quite accept it."



WENDY MOGER BROSS

This month, writer-at-large **Marie Brenner** looks at the sugar business in South Florida, which is dominated by the Fanjul brothers and which attorney Edward Tuddenham has been struggling for more than 10 years to expose. "Edward Tuddenham's epic quest is an Ahab and the whale," says Brenner. "It is a saga of tangled principles and obsession in which an unlikely Harvard Law School antagonist attempts to battle the murky, colorful world of sugar." Brenner appears to be drawn to narratives of people caught within the system. Her 1996 *V.F.* article on tobacco-company whistle-blower Jeffrey Wigand became the basis for the 1999 Michael Mann film, *The Insider,* nominated for a best-picture Oscar.



"Paula Yates was not at face value a fascinating individual," says contributing editor **Steven Daly.** "But her story says everything about the way that celebrity culture has changed in Britain over the last two decades." Born in Glasgow only a year after Paula Yates was born in North Wales, Daly remembers Yates's first flourish of fame as a witty writer and flirtatious television host. "Yates acquired her renown at a time when fame was just a hobby for young bohemians like her," says Daly, whose article appears on page 122. "She had the misfortune to grow old in public and suffer countless personal problems at a time when the British media are increasingly cruel and youth-obsessed."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 46


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Celebrate Good Times with Pottery Barn

Over 400 of New York's hippest night owls joined *Vanity Fair* in celebrating the grand opening of Pottery Barn's East 59th Street emporium. While some danced the night away to house grooves spun by Cameron Douglas and a special guest performance from Kool and The Gang's J.T. Taylor, others put their home shopping compulsions to work for a good cause: the Central Park Conservancy. No matter what their activity of choice, all guests made sure to quench their thirst with the evening's most desirable accessory: a pint-sized bottle of POP Champagne.









Top left to right: Kool & The Gang's J.T. Taylor; Michelle Boudreau and David Jimenez of Pottery Barn; *Middle:* Patricia Barroll Sellman of Pottery Barn and Paola Zanzo of the Central Park Conservancy; *Bottom:* DJ Cameron Douglas.



Famous for shooting some of the world's most beautiful women, including Madonna, Gwyneth Paltrow, and Julia Roberts, contributing photographer **Mario Testino** this month turns his lens on a man—Keanu Reeves. But his guiding principle remains the same. "I try to capture something that they wouldn't give to someone else," says Testino, who particularly enjoyed Reeves's film *My Own Private Idaho.* Testino has two books, *Alive* (Bulfinch) and *Visionaire 35 Man,* coming out this spring. Meanwhile, he is preparing for a major show at London's National Portrait Gallery in 2002.

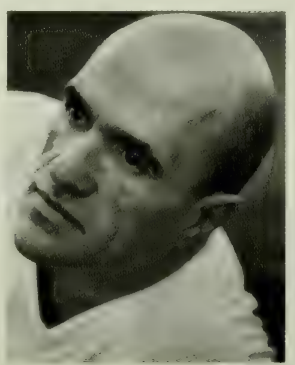


DANIELLA BOHM

Steven Bach became fascinated with legendary playwright and theater director Moss Hart after reading Hart's celebrated memoir, *Act One,* as a teenager. "It sent me into show business," Bach says. "I wanted to *be* Moss Hart." Bach worked his way up to head of worldwide production at United Artists, but his career came to a premature end in the early 80s after he became embroiled in Michael Cimino's $40 million "exploding cigar," *Heaven's Gate. Final Cut,* Bach's 1985 book about the infamous flop which sank United Artists, is regarded as one of the best inside-Hollywood books ever written. Bach has spent the past six years researching the life of Moss Hart for *Dazzler,* which is due out in April from Knopf and is excerpted on page 128.



Writing about the life of activist, journalist, and photographer Ruth Gruber was a welcome change for special correspondent **Maureen Orth,** who has spent the last few years covering such dark figures as Versace killer Andrew Cunanan (the subject of her 1999 book, *Vulgar Favors*), jailed Hollywood money manager Dana Giacchetto, and, last October, the complex Russian president, Vladimir Putin. "Coming off these tough-to-cover investigative pieces, it was heartwarming to profile somebody who has spent 70 years not only reporting but also championing causes," says Orth, who lives in Washington, D.C., with her husband, NBC's Tim Russert, and their son, Luke.



Irish writer **Colm Tóibín,** whose profile of Spanish director Pedro Almodóvar appears on page 144, lived in Spain for several years following Franco's death in 1975 and remembers the wild energy of that time. "It was a golden age, not just of artistic creation but of pure nighttime adventure," recalls Tóibín, whose most recent novel, *The Blackwater Lightship,* was shortlisted for the Booker Prize in 1999. "I was 20 when I went there first, and it certainly opened my eyes to things this boy from provincial Ireland never saw in his hometown." Returning to Madrid for this article, Tóibín found that the magic was still there. "I think Madrid has changed a lot. But, I must say, the city looked absolutely beautiful, especially at night."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 50



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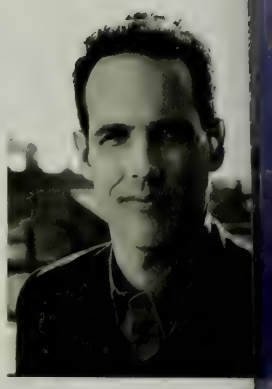
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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 46



Even though senior articles editor **Bruce Handy** was only three years old when the Cuban missile crisis occurred in 1962, it's a subject he examines this month with the release of the new film *Thirteen Days.* While preparing for the piece, Handy viewed and reviewed practically all of the A-bomb-themed movies ever made, with one exception: *Testament* (1983). "The whole movie is basically Jane Alexander watching her children slowly die of radiation sickness," explains Handy. "It's seriously the most disturbing movie I've ever seen in my whole life—beyond traumatic. I saw it when it first came out and I *should* have watched it again to research this article, but I just couldn't. I'd rather see *What Dreams May Come* again than *Testament.*"



GASPER TRINGALE

Henry Alford believes that his Common Grounds diagrams, the latest of which appears on page 100, provide "yet another addition to the canon of hilarious mathematics-based humor—your algebra jest your calculus japeries." Explaining his complex creative process, Alford says, "I draw a lot of big, overlapping circles on a huge piece of paper. It looks like the work of a cartoonist in recovery." Alford's latest book, *Out There* (Random House), a chronic of his search for the funniest person on the Internet, will be published this May, as will th paperback version of *Big Kiss* (Broadway Books), a look back at the author's days as a struggling actor.



While photographing Lara Flynn Boyle, **David LaChapelle** realized that his reputation for the risqué may be starting to precede him. "Lara was sitting there naked in the window and I'm shooting her topless. About 10 to 15 minutes later, three cop cars showed up, and the officers said they heard a porno was being shot," recalls LaChapelle, who recently won a European MTV Award for directing Moby's "Natural Blues" video. "Lara was like, 'No, it's just a typical LaChapelle shoot.'" What the neighbors saw is on page 140.



BRIAN RUSSO

Chart journalism may have started at *Spy* magazine in 1986, but **Adam Leff** (right) and **Richard Rushfield,** who have continued the form for *Vanity Fair,* point to an ancient precursor. "If you look to history, at classics of literature and the arts, the Little Buddy/Big Cool Friend theory persists throughout. In the *Iliad,* it's the relationship between Achilles and Patroclus," says Rushfield. The two, whose latest chart appears on page 104, compose the membership of the Chart Journalists Trade Union and are co-founders of the Monkey Zero Trend Consultancy. They advise their readers that grids are properly read across, not down.

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Kevin Spacey and Friends

wood's finest were out in full force on October 24 to raise y for an entertainment-worthy cause: The Motion Picture evision Fund MPTF. Hosted by Kevin Spacey and co-spon- by St. John and *Vanity Fair*, the evening was a tribute to esidents of MPTF's Woodland Hill's campus and featured rmances and readings by George Clooney, Tim Conway, Lemmon, Haley Joel Osment, Gregory Peck, and Jewel.



ght: St. John's Kelly Gray and Kevin Spacey; *Bottom Left to* Jewel; Gregory Peck and Haley Joel Osment; Robin Williams.







MaxMara Steps Out in Style

October 25, over 300 of Manhattan's tastemakers and trendsetters joined MaxMara and *Fair* Society Editor Kristina Stewart for an exclusive preview of a photo retrospective ages from *Vanity Fair's Hollywood* book. For two weeks, Tinseltown favorites—including Basinger, Johnny Depp, Jack Nicholson, Tony Curtis, and Jack Lemmon—graced the walls of the Mara boutique on New York's Madison Avenue.

Jill Roosevelt, Merrill Demler, Alicia Galitsen; Marisa Noel, GiGi Mortimer, Mariah Chase; Mara's Giorgio Guidotti and Cornelia Guest.







Ebel's Ultimate Indulgence

What goes better with luxury timepieces than the finest caviar? On November 10, Ebel and *Vanity Fair* hosted 100 guests at Westime in Los Angeles' Westside Pavilion for "The Art of Beluga," an evening devoted to the ultimate indulgences: shopping, champagne, and caviar from Petrossian Paris.



Ebel's Randy Rogers and Dominique Albergo.

Mossimo at Target

To celebrate the launch of its Mossimo collection, Target recently hosted an all-star bash at New York's Drive-In Studios. The evening drew such celebrities as Alicia Witt, Kate Dillon, Valerie Bertinelli, Joey McIntyre, Lori Laughlin, and Cynthia Rowley, all of whom eagerly threw off their shoes to join the ultimate 3-D Twister game, emceed by game show legend Wink Martindale.





***Left*: Joey McIntyre and Lori Loughlin; *Right*: Designers Cynthia Rowley and Mossimo Giannulli.**

RALPH LAUREN

ROMANCE



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LILY OF MONACO

Lily Safra on a social whirl; when Yusuf Nasrullah met Jude Law; defending Ayn Rand; dancing with Jerry Blavat; Nan Darien put out to pasture; Narnia's everlasting kingdom; praise to Irene Diamond; Damien Hirst's bad behavior

Congratulations once again, for a story well researched and well written ["Death in Monaco," by Dominick Dunne, December]. However, I wish to make a few points.

First, Edmond Safra was very close to his religion, especially near the end of his life. As a result, he must have believed his charity would earn him a place in the world to come. In terms of his philanthropy to Jewish causes, he was a modern-day Montefiore. It seems to me that his widow Lily's idea of giving is buying a new water fountain. (Granted, it *is* a nice one—I have seen it.)

Second, had he had things his way, I don't doubt that he would have preferred that the funeral service had been conducted by at least two of the hundreds of rabbis who had benefited from his largesse. I'm also sure that he would have preferred to have been surrounded by members of his own family and community rather than the people to whom his wife chose to give front-row seats. As always, she decided to create a spectacle. Although he was at odds with his brothers, Joseph and Moise, at the time of his death, there should be no doubt about the love and respect he had for them. Even when he was not on speaking terms with them, he inquired about their well-being daily through mutual friends. To watch Edmond's widow interesting herself in the seating arrangements at the funeral and what should be served at the "After-Funeral Party" must have added humiliation to the pain his brothers were already experiencing.

The memory of Edmond Safra is a blessing to all those who came to know him—even if only by reputation.

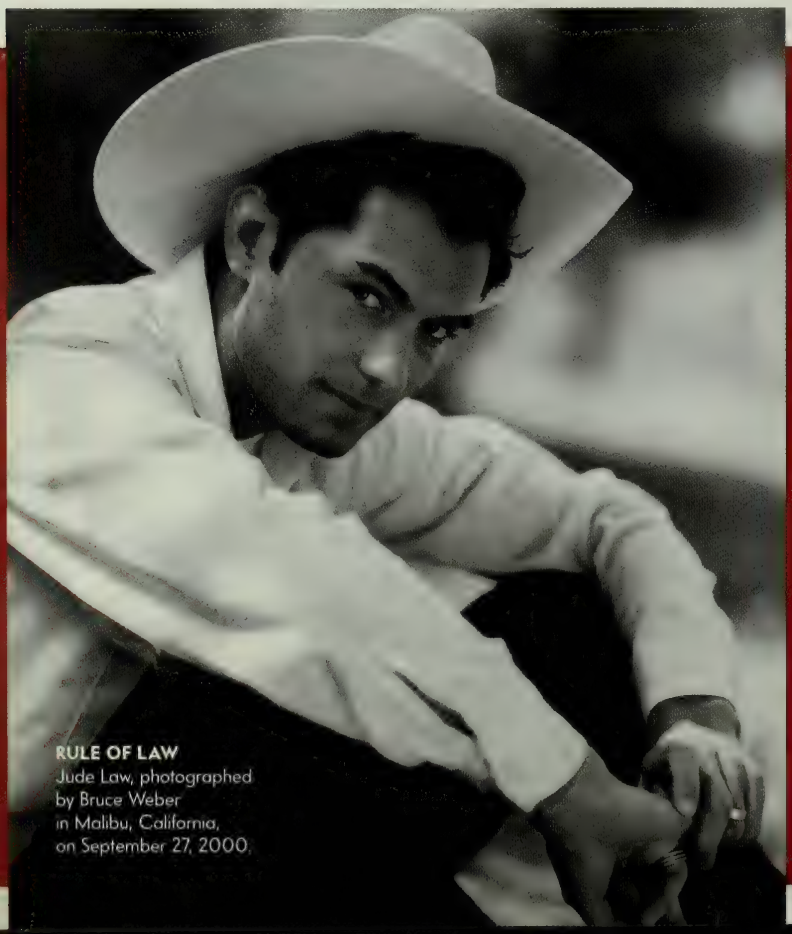
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AS IS USUAL, Dominick Dunne has transported us to another world with panache and style. The story about Lily and Edmond Safra was riveting.

LINDA PEARL
Stoughton, Massachusetts

AYN RAND SHRUGGED

I READ CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS'S article on Alan Greenspan ["Greenspan Shrugged," December] with interest. As curator of the Ayn Rand Archives, a spe-



RULE OF LAW
Jude Law, photographed by Bruce Weber in Malibu, California, on September 27, 2000.

IT HAD TO BE JUDE

A simple jaunt in Harvard Square became a traffic-stopping, heart-tickling moment of revelation as my eyes clashed with the profile of a maddeningly beautiful Jude Law on your December 2000 cover ["Hey, Jude," by Peter Biskind]. As if under a complete spell, I was drawn into purchasing the issue! I have been wild about this British boy since I fleetingly encountered him at Leicester Square in London, for the premiere of *Wilde*, and have no qualms in declaring my open animosity toward Sadie Frost for committing the sin of monopolizing the life and affections of this dazzler. He could send anyone, boy or girl, of any age, into spasms of sensual rapture and spiritual euphoria!

YUSUF NASRULLAH
Cambridge, Massachusetts

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cial department of the Ayn Rand Institute, I answered reference questions for Justin Martin, whose biography, *Greenspan: The Man Behind Money,* is mentioned in Mr. Hitchens's article.

Hitchens used the word "cult" to describe Ayn Rand's philosophy, and this depiction is false. A cult is based on faith and demands that members sacrifice to a leader and the group. By contrast, objectivism is based on the individual using reason to pursue his own happiness. In addition to books such as *Atlas Shrugged,* Ayn Rand's personal papers provide 100 linear feet of evidence of her lifelong study and advocacy of reason and independence, not faith.

In the near future, readers will be able to examine the evidence and judge for themselves, an eventuality our preservation program at the Ayn Rand Archives is ensuring.

JEFF BRITTING
Curator, the Ayn Rand Archives
Marina del Rey, California

IN HIS ARTICLE on Alan Greenspan, Christopher Hitchens evidently misremembers a conversation we once had concerning my reasons, as a young man, for changing my last name to "Branden." He attributes to me an explanation that has been hearsay for decades to the effect that Branden was an anagram for "Ben-Rand," meaning, in Hebrew, "son of Rand." I have been obliged to explain many times that this is fantasy. Just the same, the story has reappeared in many other articles as "fact." Mr. Hitchens evidently remembered my remarking on the story, but forgot that I repudiated it as nonsense. Anyone who might be interested in the actual events leading to my change of name is referred to my memoir, *My Years with Ayn Rand.*

NATHANIEL BRANDEN
Los Angeles, California

PHILADELPHIA STORY

I DIDN'T REALIZE what a blast from the past Nick Tosches's article "Hipsters and Hoodlums" [December] would be until I got to the discussions with and about Jerry Blavat. After reading it, I hunted down my album *Jerry Blavat Presents: For Dancers Only.* Listening to the music and hearing Jerry's voice, I am suddenly transported to Wagner's Ballroom in Philadelphia during my high-school years in the 60s. I only wish his radio show could reach us "yon teenagers" here in Northern California.

CAROLYN PARKER
Sunnyvale, California

NAN DARIEN, YOU *BEAST,* YOU

ONCE AGAIN, YOUR MAGAZINE h deemed it appropriate to allow untalent and obviously uneducated "writers" to sult the people of the Midwest. Althou I was at first angered by Nan Darien's hig ly offensive piece on Christmas shoppi ["Mad About That Christmas Spirit December], I later found myself laughin Ms. Darien, because of family money a social standing on the lovely island Manhattan, finds herself among what *Va ity Fair* deems to be the upper echelons human society. It is therefore highly amu ing that she considers it decorous while public to emit a sound from her mou that mimics the vocalizations of a commo farm animal ("moo"). This woman obv ously lacks class, and I find her behavior be quite gauche. To suggest in such a pu lic forum that "people from our country heartland" are bovine in nature and ough to be marked with a copper bell is not on ludicrous but also tactless and ignorant.

EMILY KATHLEEN DAV
Lexington, Kentuck

IF MS. DARIEN RUNS out of shoppin minions she can always call me. "I mus ablute" and "spec*Saks*ular" will be ne additions to my lexicon. She shares m thought that there is another way to sho that does not involve a mega-store o elves! Merry Christmas, darlings.

DAVID BEDDINGFIEL
Decatur, Alabam

THE ROWLING CHRONICLES

AS A MOTHER of four, I commend you for choosing author J. K. Rowling to be a member of your annual Hall of Fame [December]. Rowling's books excite and interest my children like no others I have found. We all eagerly anticipate Harry's fifth year at Hogwarts. However, I do have to disagree with you on one point: Narnia will never get old.

KIMBERLY W. RINGER
Modesto, California

REGARDING J. K. ROWLING and your throwaway line—"Because that Narnia business was getting old"—I was one of the 10,000 mothers who lined up to hear Rowling read in Toronto. Rowling was an enchantress. However, Narnia is neither just a book nor a myth. It is a way of living your life. Remember that the next time the wind blows through the trees or your dog or cat looks inquiringly at you. There is a life force in everything. Good



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TOBACULA

Damien Hirst, photographed by Todd Eberle at New York City's Gagosian Gallery on Septembe 26, 2000. He stands in front of *The Void*, a new work featuring 8,000 handcrafted pills.

people can do bad things, and bad people can do good things. Narnia makes more and more sense the older I become. Aslan truly rules. He is supreme.

JANE M. B. WEBB-SANKEY
Toronto, Ontario

PRECIOUS DIAMOND

THAT UTTERLY selfless soul, Irene Diamond, should be canonized ["Rebel with a Purse," by Patricia Bosworth, December]. In her tireless effort for gun control she is every mother's hero.

TRUDI SMITH
San Diego, California

HOW TELLING that when Irene Diamond asked Jesse Jackson, Colin Powell, and Mario Cuomo to be spokespeople for her Funders Collaborative for Gun Violence Prevention they all declined. Not because they may have disagreed with her cause but because they put their political careers before doing something to benefit society. It would be a great day if politicians could agree with Irene Diamond on how to improve society: enforce gun control and award full scholarships to underprivileged children who excel. It is unfortunate that politicians who consider themselves "pro-society" are actually only looking out for number one. Thank you for drawing attention to Irene Diamond's philanthropy and fabulous life story.

SYLVIA WILKINSON
Edgewood, New Mexico

HALVING A COW

HOW DID NANCY JO SALES stomach interviewing Damien Hirst ["Damien Hirst's Lost Weekend," December]? Hirst clearly has the mentality of a teenager: attempting to impress with his use of drugs and profanity, taking part in the adolescent "blood brothers" ritual, feeling secure only when he is around a lot of people. I now understand why his artwork is derived from children's toys! As a parent of two young boys, I feel sorry for Hirst's children. Hopefully their mother is a better role model. Should Hirst continue this lifestyle, he no doubt will end up like his *Death Is Irrelevant* piece.

TAMMY DEVINE
Hingham, Massachusetts

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FANFAIR

28 Days in the Life of the Culture

February 2001



HOT REELS: BRUCE HANDY on Jack Nicholson in Sean Penn's *The Pledge*, and on Guy Ritchie's new Cockney-chic film, *Snatch*

COMING ATTRACTIONS: WALTER KIRN peeks into the darkness of *Hannibal*

HOT TRACKS: LISA ROBINSON on Eric Clapton, Jennifer Lopez, and George Harrison

HOT TYPE: ELISSA SCHAPPELL on Don DeLillo, Jamaica Kincaid, and Karl Lagerfeld

Ritchie Rich

Guy Ritchie, director of *Snatch* (out this month), with producer Matthew Vaughn, photographed in West London on December 4, 2000.

February

LOVE AND BASKETBALL, AMERICAN QUILTS, AND VIBRATING BUNNIES



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY



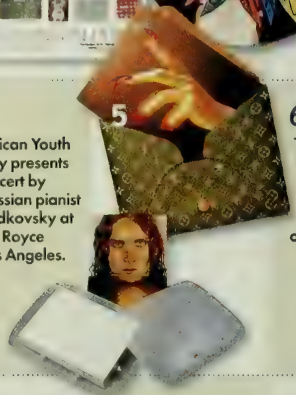


1
On display at the new Tate Modern in London, "Century City: Art and Culture in the Modern Metropolis" examines key artistic movements in nine cities including Paris, New York, Tokyo, Rio de Janeiro, and Bombay.

2
Dubliners by the Bay: The Magic Theatre in San Francisco presents the U.S. premiere of *Howie the Rookie*, the hit London play by Irish playwright Mark O'Rowe.

3
Southern comfort: "Andrew Wyeth: Close Friends," featuring seven decades' worth of work from the American painter, opens at the Mississippi Museum of Art in Jackson.

4
The American Youth Symphony presents a free concert by young Russian pianist Kirill Gliadkovsky at U.C.L.A.'s Royce Hall in Los Angeles.



5

6
The Met draws back the curtain on "Correggio and Parmigianino: Master Draftsmen of the Renaissance."

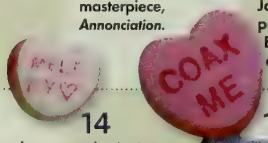
7
The Louvre unveils Nicolas Poussin's *Sainte Françoise Romaine* (which was lost and then recovered in 1997 from a public sale) alongside his 1657 masterpiece, *Annonciation*.

8
A Connecticut Yankee, the Rodgers and Hart musical based on Mark Twain's novel, is presented by City Center Encores! in New York. *Ten Unknowns*, a play by Jon Robin Baitz, previews at the Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater at Lincoln Center.

9
"When Morty Met John . . . ," Carnegie Hall's three-day festival celebrating the friendship of composers Morton Feldman and John Cage, begins today.

10
Washington, D.C., hosts the N.B.A. All-Star weekend. Non–basketball types can head over to the Phillips Collection, which opens a retrospective of Pop artist Wayne Thiebaud.





11
"A Room of Their Own" opens at the two branches of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles: "From Rothko to Rauschenberg" at California Plaza and "From Arbus to Gober" at the Geffen Contemporary.

12
"Dreaming in Print: A Decade of Visionaire," which honors the world's most expensive magazine and opened last week at New York's Museum at F.I.T., is on view through April 21.



13
Those wistful for the days of Imelda Marcos shouldn't miss *Dogeaters*, Jessica Hagedorn's play about life in the Philippines in the 1980s, which previews at the Public Theater in New York tonight.

14
Valentine's Day. London's National Gallery presents "Tell Me a Picture," an exhibition of works assembled by illustrator Quentin Blake, where children are encouraged to invent their own stories to go along with each picture.

15
Growing weary of your cubicle? Architect Deborah Berke opens her exhibition "Workplace," a photographic survey of her recent workspace designs, at the Yale School of Architecture.

16
Posttraumatic Valentine's Day therapy: Noël Coward's *Design for Living*, a comedy about three artists in search of true love, begins previews at the Roundabout in New York.

17
It's Paree on the Mississippi as the Saint Louis Art Museum presents "Van Gogh and the Painters of the Petit Boulevard," featuring the work of van Gogh, Gauguin, Pissarro, Seurat, and Toulouse-Lautrec.



18
Celebrating the centennial of the artist's birth, the Philadelphia Museum of Art presents "Alice Neel," with paintings and watercolors which have never before been exhibited.

19
Presidents' Day.



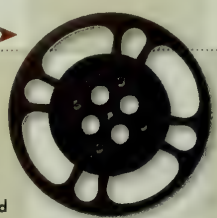
20
Schindler I: "Shaping the Great City: Modern Architecture in Central Europe, 1890–1937" opens at the Getty Center in Los Angeles.

21
The third annual Boston Underground Film Festival (or BUFF, to those in the know) kicks off today. Awards include Most Effectively Offensive Film. The festival's award statue: a vibrating bunny.

22
Conductor Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony play Carnegie Hall for the second of two nights. The first was dedicated to Stravinsky, tonight to Mahler.

23
Expect a chintz-appliqué riot at the Textile Museum in Washington, D.C., as "Fanciful Flowers: Botany and the American Quilt" opens today.

24
Chicago's Terra Museum of American Art pays homage to one of America's great illustrators with "Distant Shores: The Odyssey of Rockwell Kent."



25
Schindler II: L.A.'s Museum of Contemporary Art at California Plaza opens "The Architecture of R. M. Schindler," which includes original drawings, photographs, and models of the work of the Vienna-born modernist architect.

26
Texas T: The Dallas Museum of Art's retrospective of British sculptor Henry Moore opened yesterday.



27
More visitors to Carnegie Hall: conductor Vladimir Ashkenazy and the Philadelphia Orchestra take the stage for a night.

28
The Smithsonian's Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, D.C., hosts the first stop of a touring exhibition dedicated to South African filmmaker William Kentridge.






Oscar de la Renta

London Crawling

GUY RITCHIE PULLS ANOTHER CAPER WITH *SNATCH*

With his new film, *Snatch*, the director **Guy Ritchie** has essentially remade his previous feature, *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*. Is this a bad thing? Only if you don't have a passion for amusingly overplotted heist movies featuring multiple gangs of British thugs, comically sadistic violence, and, in both films' most menacing role, the former footballer and cinematic *objet d'art* **Vinnie Jones,** whose handsome slab of a face serves as a kind of wildlife refuge for his darting ferret eyes and nasty little gash of a mouth. Yes, Ritchie has a formula, but it hasn't yet devolved to the **Roger Moore** or **Timothy Dalton** stage. (Speaking of which, has anyone thought of hiring Jones to play 007?) In one major departure from the starless *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*, **Brad Pitt** has been imported for *Snatch* to play a bare-knuckle boxer of Irish-gypsy extraction; in a film full of great character turns, Pitt even manages to steal his scenes with an impenetrable accent that is one of the movie's running jokes, though it probably won't seem funny to the legions of Irish-gypsy actors who have a hard enough time finding parts without having to compete with big-shot American movie stars. **(Rating: ★★★)** —BRUCE HANDY





DEN OF THIEVES
***Above,* Brad Pitt as Mickey and Jason Flemyng (third from left) as Darren having tea with their Irish-gypsy brood in *Snatch*. *Inset,* Benicio Del Toro as diamond thief Franky Four Fingers.**

HOT REELS

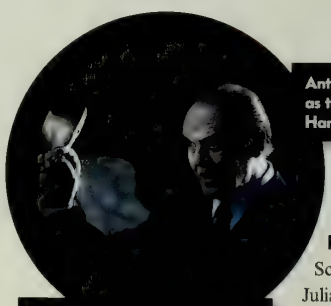
Blood Simple

SEAN PENN DIRECTS JACK NICHOLSON IN *THE PLEDGE*

The Pledge is a film about faith that may, at times, test yours. **Sean Penn's** third effort as a director is gripping in so many of its particulars that when it goes occasionally awry you may find yourself almost physically rooting for it—a potential home run veering toward the foul pole. The story of a retired police detective (**Jack Nicholson**) who becomes obsessed with solving the rape and murder of a little girl, *The Pledge* is an unusually well-observed character study that suffers from also wanting to be a thriller. Penn's direction is so assured, the performances he coaxes from his actors so specific and lived-in, that rote bits of genre business (clues, coincidences, skeptical superiors) and attempts at Hitchcockian audience manipulation feel as contrived as, of course, they always are. Penn should stick to visual poetry: many directors have used the purity of new-fallen snow as an ironic counterpoint to violence, as Penn does here, but has anyone else offered a vast indoor turkey farm as the staging point for a descent into hell? Nicholson, unabashedly fat and balding, gives the first sexually vulnerable performance of his career—at one point he's dumbfounded by a kiss, and you may even believe him. It's a muted, moving performance, one that cuts far deeper than the usual movie-star-playing-against-type lark (though, come to think of it, his public cavortings with various women may at this stage of his life be the far more impressive turn). **(Rating: ★★★)** —B.H.



BLACK JACK
Sam Shepard and Jack Nicholson in *The Pledge*.



Anthony Hopkins as the insatiable Hannibal Lecter.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Trailer of the month: *Hannibal.* **Directed by:** Ridley Scott. **Starring:** Julianne Moore, Anthony Hopkins, Ray Liotta. **Coming to a theater near you:** February 9. **The basics:** The long-awaited follow-up encounter session between primly sexy federal agent Clarice Starling (Moore) and dandified flesh-eating killer Hannibal Lecter (Hopkins). **Setting the mood:** Lecter, wearing a rakish hat and long coat, and possessed of a vaguely Italianate depravity, strolls the dark streets of Florence, wreathed in dry-ice fog, and plays grand piano in deserted museum. Clarice, looking trim and well-bred in simple T-shirt, works late in cavernous government office building, beset by *noir*-ish shadows. **How they've aged:** Lecter's parchment skin is drier, crinklier, his affect jauntier, his manner more dapper. Clarice, but for her exceptionally straight, clean hair, bears no more resemblance to Jodie Foster than *Bewitched*'s second Darrin bore to Darrin the first. **British psychopaths have a way of putting things:** "I must confess to you, I'm giving very serious thought—to eating your wife." **The anxiety of influence:** The "Jason" movies (Lecter's sinister mask), Pantene-shampoo commercials (Moore's glossy hair), *Dracula* (Lecter's Lugosian lugubriousness), the novels of Henry James (serious, uptight American girl meets her match in kinky old-world seducer). **(Rating: ★★★★)** —WALTER KIRN


DOLCE & GABBANA



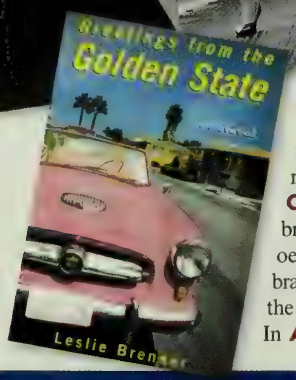


HOT TYPE

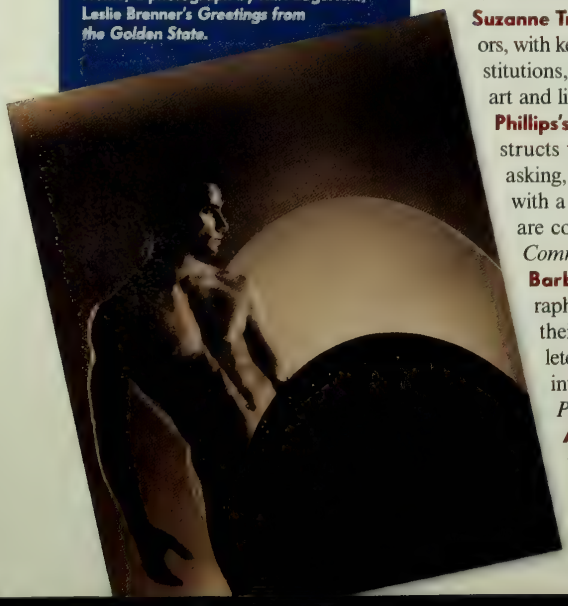
ELISSA SCHAPPELL

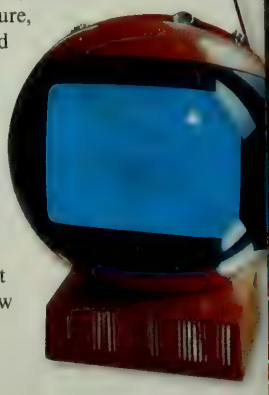
When winter feels unending, drive yourself into the dizzying whiteout of **Don DeLillo's** seductive and mystifying tale *The Body Artist* (Scribner), in which a lonely young widow encounters a bewildering ageless stranger who seems to transcend the bounds of reality and consciousness.

Also this month: Swimming pools, movie stars, toe socks . . . **Leslie Brenner's** debut novel, *Greetings from the Golden State* (Henry Holt), finds a chronically perky California family on the brink of 70s-style immolation. The aftermath of a tragic summer weekend reverberates in **Joanna Hershon's** page-turning premiere, *Swimming* (Ballantine). In **Alan Bennett's** comic fable, *The Clothes They Stood Up In* (Random House), an English couple are forced to confront who they really are after their apartment is pillaged and then, voilà, restored! Showcasing the father of Madonna's conical bra, **Colin McDowell's** *Jean-Paul Gaultier* (Viking Studio) offers brilliant flashes of the outrageous and irreverent tastemaker's oeuvre. **Paul Lussier's** *Last Refuge of Scoundrels* (Warner) is a wooden-teeth-and-all historical novel celebrating our Founding Fathers' lust, greed, and self-aggrandizement—oh, Ben, say it isn't so! **Karl Lagerfeld,** the *Führer* of Fashion, flaunts his "notion of form" in his new photography book, *Aktstrakt* (Steidl). In **Amy Tan's** *The Bonesetter's Daughter* (Putnam), a Chinese mother recalls her girlhood in China, while her American daughter ghostwrites self-help books. "I just brought out the worst in them," boasts the Rolling Stones' legendary Svengali-like manager, **Andrew Loog Oldham,** in his scandalous, conversational memoir, *Stoned* (St. Martin's). In *Happy Hours* (Cliff Street/HarperCollins), **Devon Jersild** collects the barroom confessions and life stories of alcoholic women. Former Peace Corps volunteer **Peter Hessler** dedicated himself for two years to teaching English on the Yangtze; *River Town* (HarperCollins) offers an intimate, humorous, true-to-life portrait of modern China. For you **Edward Hoagland** nuts the wait is over—the master essayist and fiction and travel writer relives his struggles and joys in *Compass Points* (Pantheon). **Suzanne Trocme's** *Retro Home* (Rizzoli) is a swell look at classic 20th-century interiors, with keen photos by Neil Mersh. Start spreading the news: two grand New York institutions, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and **Brooke Astor,** toast The City in art and literature with *New York, New York* (MMA Universe). Psychotherapist **Adam Phillips's** compulsively readable *Promises, Promises* (Basic Books) deconstructs the relationship between psychoanalysis and literature, asking, Why lie on the couch when you can take to your bed with a book? **Jamaica Kincaid's** classic *New Yorker* pieces are collected in *Talk Stories* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux). In *Committed to the Image* (Merrell Publishers), edited by **Barbara Head Millstein,** contemporary black photographers provide intimate social commentary by turning their lenses on black artists, philosophers, writers, athletes, and politicians. Before you fling yourself willy-nilly into the wilderness of pitching woo, cool your jets with *Prenups for Lovers* (Villard), in which family-law expert **Arlene G. Dubin** counsels would-be paramours on how to pop the p-word. Go forth and romance . . .



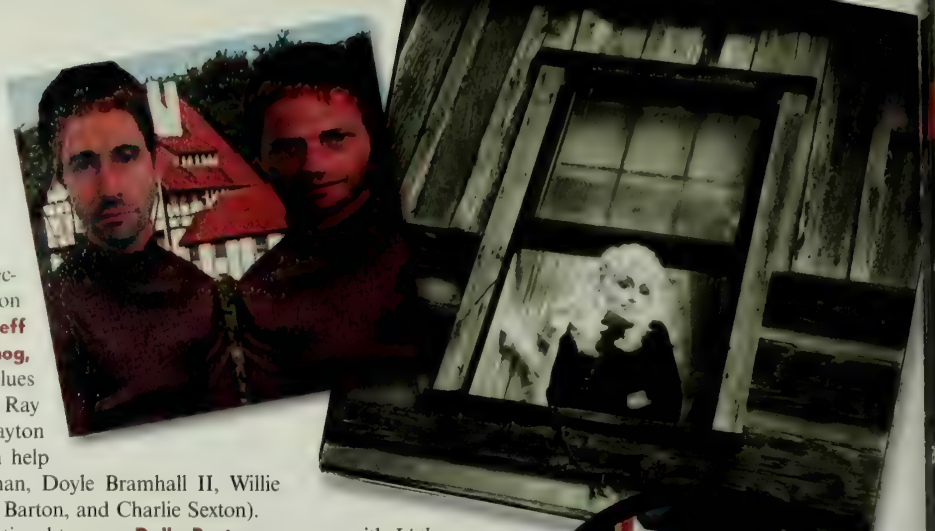






Clockwise from top left: Models and Queensborough Bridge, 1962, by William Klein, from New York, New York; Kristen McNenamy in Jean Paul Gaultier, photographed by Jean-Baptiste Mondino; A Day of Atonement, 1985, by Ron Campbell, from Committed to the Image; a JVC television from Retro Home; a photograph by Karl Lagerfeld; Leslie Brenner's Greetings from the Golden State.


DOLCE & GABBANA



HOT TRACKS

LISA ROBINSON

Strings attached: The electric guitar is alive and well on new albums coming from **Jeff Beck, Eric Clapton, Spacehog,** and **Double Trouble**—the blues band led by former Stevie Ray Vaughan sidemen Chris Layton and Tommy Shannon (with help from friends Jimmie Vaughan, Doyle Bramhall II, Willie Nelson, Dr. John, Lou Ann Barton, and Charlie Sexton).

For your consideration: National treasure **Dolly Parton** graces us with *Little Sparrow,* her second Appalachian/bluegrass CD of songs that, this time, range from Cole Porter to Collective Soul. All former pretensions are forgiven now that **Rufus Wainwright** includes a sound bite from the delightfully eccentric Edie Beale (*Grey Gardens*) on his melodic, introspective *Poses.* **Jonatha Brooke** joins a growing list of fed-up, talented musicians (Aimee Mann, Ani DiFranco) who put out albums on their own labels and Web sites; helping on Brooke's new *Steady Pull* is legendary producer Bob Clearmountain and vocalist Michael Franti. *Trouble in Shangri-La* is the much-anticipated solo album from **Stevie Nicks,** her first in seven years. What a surprise: **Jennifer Lopez's** new CD (*J.Lo*) sounds a lot like her old CD—slick, catchy, and ready for interpretive dance in those big-budget videos. *At Last* is the aptly titled new one from **Gladys Knight,** her first R&B record in six years. *Simply Mortified* is the fun new CD from **BS2000,** the side project of Beastie Boy Adam Horovitz and pal Amery "Awol" Smith, who describe it as "lo-fi, go-go, Farfisa swing beats for the new millennium."





New kids: American audiences discover what all the fuss is about with Brit folk sensation **Eliza Carthy's** *Angels and Cigarettes.* You'll hear a lot about 26-year-old **Pete Yorn,** whose debut, *musicforthemorningafter,* lives up to its buzz. **Ours** lead singer Jimmy Gnecco has been called "the next Jeff Buckley" and "the new Bono" (he's neither), and the band's three-years-in-the-making debut, *DistortedLullabies,* is finally out, with all its drama and histrionics intact. For fans of shirtless, derivative hair bands and tattoos, **Buckcherry** is back with its second outing, *Time Bomb.*



Clockwise from top left: Adam Horovitz and Amery "Awol" Smith of BS2000; Dolly Parton; Rufus Wainwright; newcomer Eliza Carthy; and Jimmy Smith, at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles.

Around the world: Two new releases of 1962 Caribbean field recordings are added to the brilliant *Alan Lomax Collection.* Mississippi funkster **Olu Dara's** *Neighborhoods* features guest appearances by Cassandra Wilson and Dr. John. *Ravi Shankar Full Circle/Carnegie Hall 2000* is last October's concert by the sitar god, with special guest, daughter **Anoushka Shankar.** *Dot Com Blues* is the new one from sublime organist **Jimmy Smith.** *Los Super Seven* is the second self-titled CD from the Mexican-American group led by Los Lobos' David Hidalgo and Cesar Rosas.

Restored, reissued: **George Harrison's** *All Things Must Pass* celebrates its 30th anniversary with a rerelease, and anthologies are out from **Love, Tim Buckley,** and the **Motels.** *Live from New York* is a two-CD set that celebrates such New York City jazz clubs as the Village Vanguard and Blue Note, with performances by **Dizzy Gillespie, Oscar Peterson, Dave Brubeck, James Moody,** the **Jazz Messengers,** and more.

Also out: New CDs from **Aerosmith, Nas, Redman, Blues Traveler, Aaliyah, Delbert McClinton, Daft Punk, Boy George, John Hammond,** and **Electric Light Orchestra's** first studio album (*Zoom*) in 15 years.

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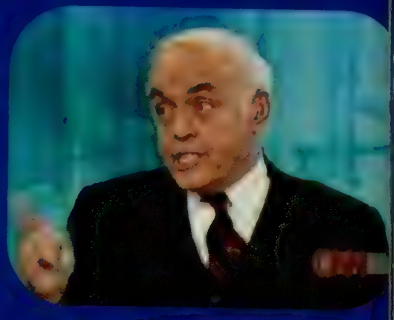
JAMES WOLCOTT

PUNDITRY FOR DUMMIES

Why sweat over your laptop, trying to make every word count, when you can gasbag your way to fame and lecture fees? TV punditry looks easy (and it is), but for lasting success—à la Chris Matthews, Jeff Greenfield, or Margaret Carlson—follow these 10 simple rules

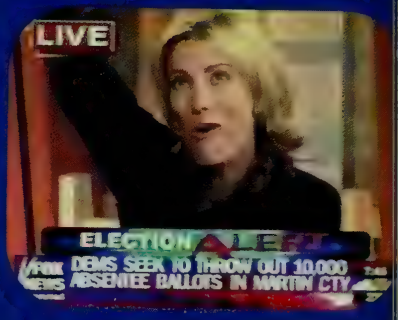


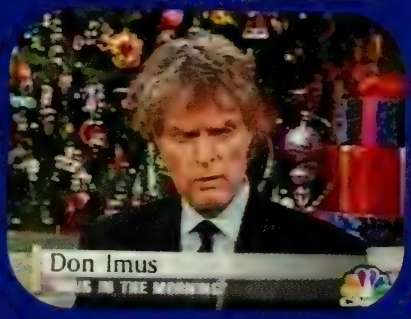










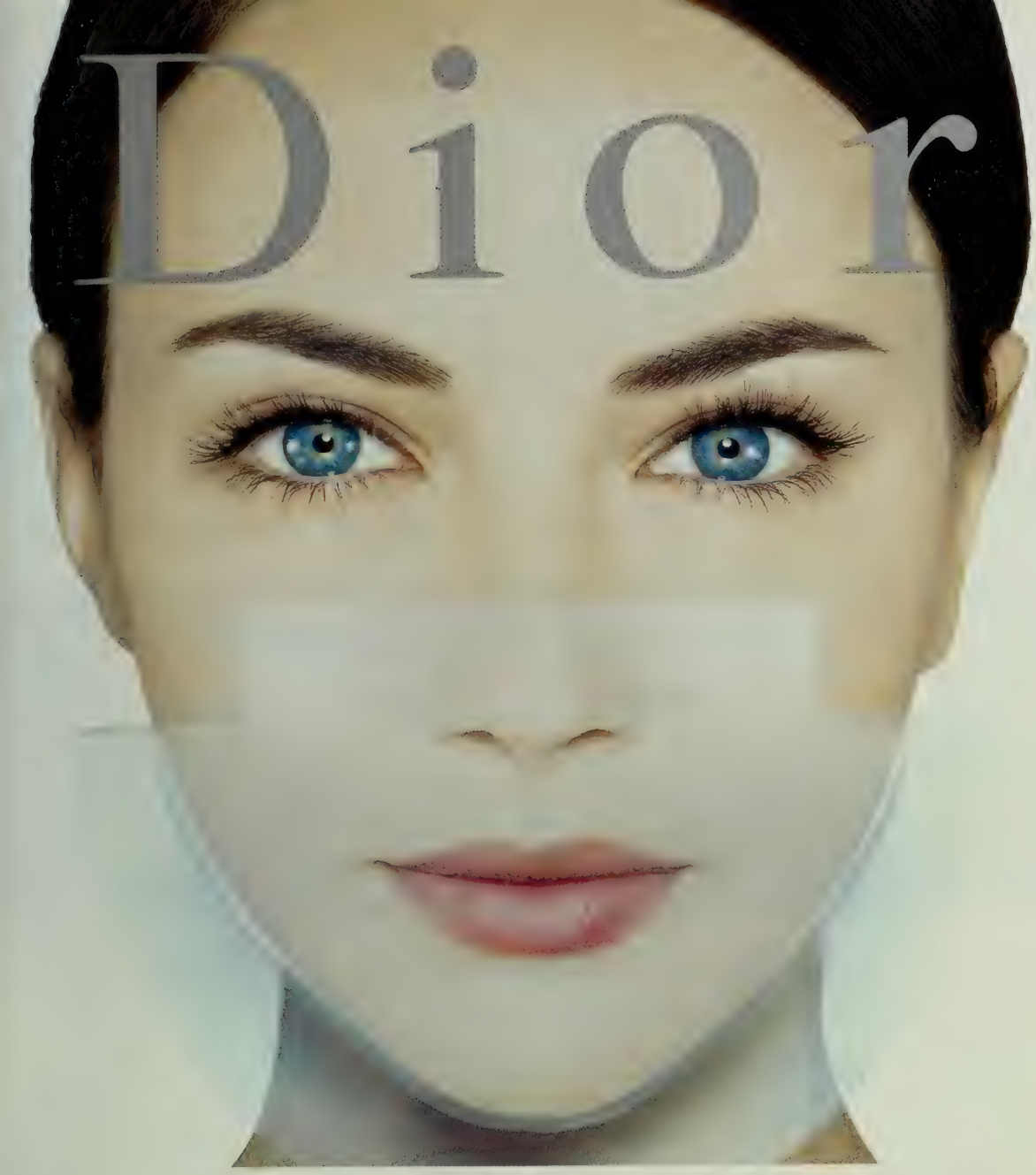






TALKING HEADS: Holding forth on the presidential election are, top row, George Stephanopoulos on *This Week with Sam Donaldson and Cokie Roberts*, Cokie Roberts, Robert Novak on *The Capital Gang*; center, John McLaughlin, Chris Matthews on *Hardball*, Laura Ingraham on *Fox & Friends*; bottom, Don Imus on CNBC, Doris Kearns Goodwin on *The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*, Tim Russert on *Meet the Press*.

Nothing puts more of a damper on a writer's day than actually having to drop anchor and write. Civilians think a writer's life is taking sips of coffee in your bathrobe while the rest of the world reports for work, but from the writer's perspective it's more like being in perpetual summer school, stuck indoors while everyone else is out playing. All of the time-honored delay tactics and sorry excuses for missed deadlines handed down through generations of hacks—from the coffeehouse wits of 18th-century London to the Josh Freelantzovitzes of our own day, bent over their laptops in the window seats at Starbucks—only postpone the inevitable anticlimax of having to put away the newspaper, mute the TV, and coax a few dinky paragraphs out of one's inner blah. Nonfiction writers have discovered that there is a lucrative way to lighten this overhanging chore. It's called punditry, taken from the Hindi term for a "learned man," and it can be the ticket out of the tedium of trying to make every word count. Once one can parlay a byline into a TV I.D.-tag, the quality craftwork of journalism—constructing paragraphs as if they were fine cabinets, filigreeing the sentences with a wry touch here, a bass note there—becomes a Victorian enterprise that no longer need weigh one down. Being granted the license to blab on TV permits the writer to blab in print, since it all becomes part of the same shtick. Grooming a loftier persona on the page will only confuse your new fans! Now that so many journal-

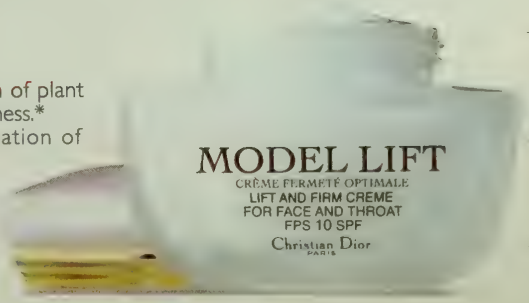


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ists are hanging out their shingles on the Internet (Mickey Kaus, Andrew Sullivan, and Joshua Micah Marshall all have their own busy Web sites), the old Walter Lippmann formalities have gone kaput. Chat is king.

Sure, punditry looks easy, doubters will scoff. Because it is! Do you think Tweety Birds such as Margaret Carlson (*Time*) or Tucker Carlson (no relation, *The Weekly Standard*) could do it if it weren't? Moreover, job prospects have never been riper. Everyone grouches about tracking polls, photo ops, and "Sabbath gasbags" (Calvin Trillin's pungent phrase) to equally futile effect: the expansion of cable news coverage of the latest hoo-ha—what Frank Rich has christened the "Mediathon"—requires a full roster of rotating faces, some fresh, others old-reliable. (The cable channels often stack four pundits at once in a *Brady Bunch* grid.) But if instant analysis seems like an E-ZPass lane to fame, highway-robbery speaking fees, and unctuous phone calls from senior officials close to the president, beware. The spiral staircase of punditry is strewn with the twisted remains of writers who couldn't quite make the climb to the top. Scant years ago, Ruth Conniff of *The Progressive* surfaced on CNN talk shows, so young, so full of peppy, socialist idealism. She's supposedly a regular commentator on the Fox News Channel, but I didn't spot her once during the election-crisis coverage—where were they hiding this breath of spring? Where is sour-puss *Washington Times* columnist Mona Charen, a once familiar presence? Her conservative parking spot seems to have been delegated to Kate O'Beirne of the *National Review* (a regular on CNN's *The Capital Gang*), leaving Charen in limbo. Of the blonde-witch coven that boiled Clinton in a pot over Monica Lewinsky, Laura Ingraham (author of *The Hillary Tiap*) is still making the rounds while Ann Coulter (author of *High Crimes and Misdemeanors: The Case Against Bill Clinton*) seems to have fallen by the wayside, no longer enticing viewers with the *Basic Instinct* ride of her miniskirts and *Fatal Attraction* stare.

To assist my brethren in their ruthless climb to the hospitality suite of celebrity journalism, I have devised a 10-point program that will help prospective pundits not only get to the top, but stay there.

1. Abandon Your Ideals

They're only holding you back. You'll feel so much better, so much *lighter,* once you let go. There was a time when your role model might have been Bobby Kennedy in rolled-up shirtsleeves wading into a sea of outstretched hands in Harlem; or perhaps—shudder—it was Newt Gingrich standing like the Pillsbury Doughboy before the billboard-size copy of the Contract with America on the steps of the Capitol. Treasure these images in your scrapbook for their inspirational value, but don't let them mist your mind. To be a successful pundit is to forgo quixotic crusades for a hard-boiled cynicism and sarcasm worthy of a *film noir* detective in some fancy joint. Henceforth, you must patronize politicians (aside from a few personal pets) as used-car salesmen, dismiss civil servants as "faceless bureaucrats," and regard foreign partners as America's puny chess pieces. Consider Chris Matthews, host of MSNBC's *Hardball,* and Lawrence O'Donnell Jr., MSNBC's senior political analyst and a panelist on *The McLaughlin Group:* Matthews worked for former House Speaker Tip O'Neill, O'Donnell for Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, yet you'll seldom hear them crooning about the glory days of Democratic liberalism, mourning the loss of sweeping social initiatives. They see through their former allies and cronies, saving their most fire-breathing scorn for liberals who pad their ambitions in soft, pandering baby fat. Their favorite target is Bill Clinton, who symbolizes the damp underbelly of the Kennedy legacy of public jauntiness, private debauchery. They beat up on him like a couple of rogue cops. (The liberal pundit who has kept the faith is Doris Kearns Goodwin, wrapping her rooting interest for a return to New Deal/Great Society big-government rollout in warm nostalgia.) On the Republican side, Tony Blankley, Gingrich's former mouthpiece and also a panelist on *The McLaughlin Group,* can barely recite the conservative mantra of less regulation, lower taxes without his lips betraying a smile. He dresses like a dapper riverboat gambler, as if to signal to the audience, "Don't kid yourself, folks—it's all a game."

The Gap-ad attire of Andrew Sullivan telegraphs a nonconformist message.



TYING ONE ON: Thomas Oliphant on *The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer,* Tucker Carlson on CNN's *The Spin Room,* and George Will on *This Week* on ABC.

2. Dress the Part

Tony Blankley can get away with a Jackie Gleason ensemble—a portly dandy can carry off a carnation in the lapel. You, buster, probably can't. The moody Mafia hit-man dark shirts and electric ties of *Salon*'s Jake Tapper are a singular statement, as is the casual Gap-ad attire of Andrew Sullivan, which telegraphs a nonconformist message consonant with his gay-Catholic-conservative identity. (Michael Kinsley in the same outfit would look as if he forgot to change.) One fashion option is the popular bow tie. The pre-eminent bow-tie pundit is, of course, George Will (ABC's *This Week with Sam Donaldson and Cokie Roberts*), on whom this puckish accessory achieves an odd sobriety. It seems to fasten his gravitas in place. On Thomas Oliphant (*The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*) and Tucker Carlson (the rising star of CNN's *Late Edition* and *The Spin Room*), it serves a more traditional function as a twerp accessory. But for



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most male pundits, standard business attire is the safest bet.

Female pundits such as Margaret Carlson employ Susie Student eyeglasses for that sorority look, but most choose a sedate, borderline-matronly wardrobe and a coif that might be called Hillary lite. The balancing act for women is looking attractively telegenic without coming on too overtly sexy, arousing the resentment of other women and impure thoughts in the horny hosts (a mistake made by Ruth Shalit, who, before she gave up political reporting for advertising, appeared on *Politically Incorrect with Bill Maher* in dome shoes and baby-doll makeup). Sparky blondes such as Laura Ingraham, who posed on the cover of *The New York Times Magazine* in a leopard-print miniskirt, have learned to lower their wattage and adopt a tamer junior-law-partner getup that makes their political cheap shots sound like feisty advocacy.

3. Bury Your Nose in Don Imus

The view isn't pretty, but it'll pay off down the line.

The successful pundit understands that punditry begins at dawn, with a quick on-line skim of the buzzworthiest sites (Drudge, *Salon, Slate*) and a mental download of the *New York Times* op-ed page to find out the smarty-pants line to take as laid down by Gail Collins or Maureen Dowd. Then it's time to tune into *Imus in the Morning,* a syndicated radio show simulcast on MSNBC, the breakfast club of the punditry. Although Imus has lost audience share in recent years, his appeal to the Northeast Corridor media elite has never been stronger. The I-man stamp of grumpy approval ("Bernie, see if you can get that lying weasel Paul Begala on the phone") means that the pundit has well and truly arrived. Tim Russert, Jeff Greenfield, Laura Ingraham, Jonathan Alter, Howard Fineman, Frank Rich, Chris Matthews, Cokie Roberts, Mary Matalin, Mike Barnicle, George Stephanopoulos, Bob Schieffer, even the reclusive Maureen Dowd—all take their spin at the mike as members of the Imus all-star squad. To make it onto the Imus show, however, his people must call you. Being pushy will only earn you Imus's leather-tongued wrath. While waiting for this summons to the majors, familiarize yourself with every aspect of his big-deal life. His bossy wife, Deirdre. His son, Wyatt. His ramshackle brother, Fred. Become conversant on I-man topics such as Joseph Abboud neckwear and custom-made cowboy boots; listen to Delbert McClinton, read Kinky Friedman mysteries, catch Rob Bartlett in the play *Tabletop.* Prepare yourself, grasshopper, for the trial ahead, always keeping in mind the message of hope enunciated by Johnny Carson, who, after a particularly obsequious compliment from sidekick Ed McMahon, turned to the camera and pronounced, "Sucking up *does* work."

The danger of dealing with Imus is sucking up to excess. Even the most vain monarch doesn't want his courtiers to drool. An Imus rookie must be a dignified toady, making exaggerated bows to his exalted status ("Yes, Your Lordship, the Dixie Chicks indeed rock"), extracting from his incoherent ramblings a pithy nugget of received wisdom, and accepting his teasing as part of the hazing process. Once you've passed the Imus initiation, proceed carefully. Don't get too chummy. Work in the fawning references to Deirdre, Wyatt, and the Imus Ranch slowly, judiciously, raising yourself from a prostrate position by imperceptible degrees. A sudden swagger will only provoke Imus to pop open a can of salsa-flavored whupass. I-man regulars such as CNN's Jeff Greenfield and radio host Mike Francesca enjoy the privilege of flinging darts at Imus's expense, targeting his temper and turkey neck, but insult humor from a relative newcomer is a risky proposition. Err on the side of caution. Above all, never presume to call him "Don," an honor reserved for media equals (Russert, Tom Brokaw) and longtime pals (sportswriter Mike Lupica). The deference you pay will yield lifelong dividends. Because once you're inducted into the Imus fraternity, you're set. The Cosa Nostra couldn't be tighter.

Imus's stamp of grumpy approval means that the pundit has truly arrived.

Consider the case of columnist Mike Barnicle. Accused of plagiarism and fictionalizing sources, this stale-beer, man-of-the-people Mike Royko pretender was bounced from *The Boston Globe* and could have easily joined fellow miscreants Janet Cook and Stephen Glass in journalism's leper colony. Almost anyone else would have had to slink off into anonymity. But braced by Imus and Tim Russert, who kept throwing him on the air despite the leaky holes in his reputation, Barnicle managed to win back his badge and completely recharge his blowhard batteries. He has a new soapbox in New York's Sunday *Daily News* and has survived his own perfect storm. So take heart: pundits are loyal to their own kind, once they make the cut.

4. Master the Snappy Patter of Pop Culture

Many of the eulogies for Lars-Erik Nelson, the *Daily News* columnist and *New York Review of Books* contributor, whose death in November left an unfillable gap of candor and integrity, quoted a complaint he had lodged against his colleagues in the press—that what they were practicing these days wasn't political analysis but "theater criticism." Shrewd owls such as Nelson and Jack Germond represent a diminishing breed. In the past a prospective pundit could pass inspection by mouthing a rosary of political clichés. The New Hampshire primary: "retail politics." Social Security: "the third rail of American politics." Ronald Reagan: "the Great Communicator." Today's pundit, raised in front of the TV and the computer screen, doesn't have the luxury of dismissing political theatrics as so much mascara. She or he has to be not merely a theater critic but an insatiable pop-culture sponge, putting an *Entertainment Weekly* face on every political player (Katherine Harris as Cruella De Vil). It is not enough to trot out the same tired line from *Casablanca* ("The Republicans were shocked, shocked, to discover pork in the House appropriations bill"), or to evoke *Wayne's World* ("It looks as if Ralph Nader will be forgiven by the Democrats—NOT"). Keeping tabs on current pop-culture fluff is hard work, requiring constant scanning, a cement butt, and the ability to turn attention deficit to your advantage. Let Maureen Dowd be your *Love Boat* guide. She and *New York Times* colleague Frank Rich are the ones most responsible for chasing politics through the cineplex. A recent Dowd column on George W. Bush began, "President-elect (?) Mini-Me has not yet started gnawing on his cat, as the 'Austin Powers' Mini-Me did to the hairless Mr. Bigglesworth"—a wisecrack that was cited that week by Al Hunt on *The Capital Gang,* much to Robert Novak's unamusement.

5. Pick a Side, Then Stick with It

Crucial to the career prospects of the aspiring pundit is deciding which team to play on. Committing to conservatism based on a close reading of Edmund Burke, the Federalist Papers, and the criticism of T. S. Eliot has become as passé as subscribing to liberalism after repeated exposure to John Stuart Mill and Arthur Schle-





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singer Jr.'s *The Age of Roosevelt.* Unless you've undergone strict Jesuit training, having too much intellectual ballast will only load you down and hamper your agility to dance around the truth when it comes time to defend Tom DeLay without gagging. No, today one's political loyalty is mostly a brand preference, like choosing Coke over Pepsi, Apple over Wintel. (Or a negative brand-selection rooted in antipathy, a way of signing up for any posse hounding Hillary Clinton.) Once your political label is chosen, however, it's pinned to your hide. Idiosyncratic political commentators who attack issues from unpredictable angles, such as the brilliant Kevin Phillips, who went from crafting Nixon's southern strategy to being the pin-striped populist of the books *Arrogant Capital* and *Boiling Point,* perplex talk-show programmers trying to book a simple Punch-and-Judy act. Similarly, sage elders who transcend partisan bickering, Barnes, are forced to collude in the laughable fiction that a lukewarm moderate like Kondracke consorts like a French hussy with the left. (When not crossing his arms and pouting, Fred makes ho-ho references to Mort's "liberal buddies on the Hill.") If I were you, I'd seize the opportunity of a possible liberal swingback and try out for the underdog team. Unless, of course, you feel that would violate your "principles."

6. Once You Stake Out a Position, Feel Free to Abandon It

Dramatic flip-flops, which can be fatal to the health of a political career ("Read my lips—no second term"), are integral items in a pundit's acrobatic repertoire, along with the Palestinian-state pommel-horse straddle, the whoopee cartwheel, and the indignant whipback. Logical inconsistencies—lauding Anita Hill as a brave voice speaking truth to power, then diagnosing Kathleen Willey as a hysteric; asserting bates into karate catfights, midair duels of catchphrases.

He/She says, "Chinese money-laundering!"

You say, "Iran-contra!"

He/She says, "'No controlling legal authority!'"

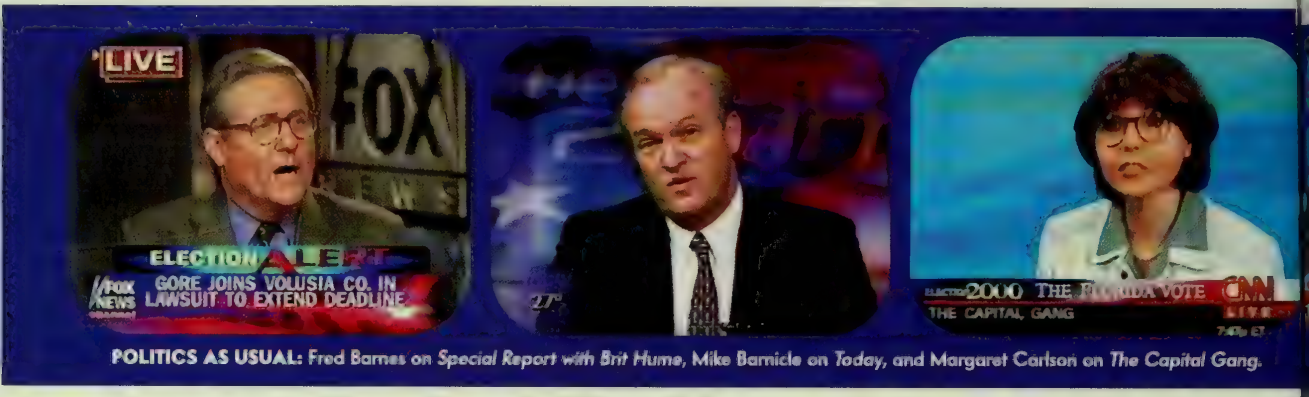
You say, "'Subliminable!'"

He/She says, "Class warfare!"

You say, "Top 1 percent!"

In the future, the transcripts of pundit squabbles will come to resemble snippets from e. e. cummings, chunks of concrete poetry.

doorpound of miami mob!
dimpled ballot bingo.
Katherine Harris's red-red lipstick
—democracy's deathkiss
gore (sigh)/bush . . . hidebehinddaddy
How dja lk yr
willofthepeople
now?
mr chad



POLITICS AS USUAL: Fred Barnes on *Special Report with Brit Hume,* Mike Barnicle on *Today,* and Margaret Carlson on *The Capital Gang.*

Margaret Carlson employs Susie Student eyeglasses for that sorority look.

such as *The Washington Post*'s David S. Broder, the anointed egghead of Washington correspondents, function as sedatives during periods of national uncertainty and unrest. As long as Broder retains the title of the press corps's most respected calmer-downer, no one else need apply. Your task is not to hold complex problems up to a prism or to allay the anxiety of a troubled nation; your job is to dig a foxhole on one side of the liberal-conservative divide and fight like a breezy fanatic, giving no ground.

But which side? Eight years of Clinton scandal and the insurgence of Fox News have created openings for conservative nasties, but the saturation level may have been reached. Radio gripefests are dominated almost entirely by filibustering reactionaries like Sean Hannity and Bill O'Reilly (both Fox hosts). Unadulterated liberals have become so rare that the stars of Fox's *The Beltway Boys,* Mort Kondracke and Fred

"the rule of law" until the rule of law rules against you—can be tucked into the larger consistency of sticking to the game plan. Twenty-twenty hindsight and a dose of amnesia allow even the most myopic opinion-maker to smooth out bad calls into the clean horizon of history. (Pundits who pronounced Clinton "political dead meat" during the Monica craze now marvel at his Houdini escape as if it were an outcome any fool could have foreseen.) Maintaining a fluid line of logical inconsistency means that the old debating-society rules no longer apply. In the early years of *Firing Line,* which was broadcast from 1966 to 1999, host William F. Buckley Jr. had a feline ability to tease out the weak threads of an opponent's presentation until the entire case seemed to unravel. Today no one has the TV patience for such slow, methodical cross-exams. Constant interruptions and high-contrast personalities have miniaturized political de-

7. Learn to Modulate

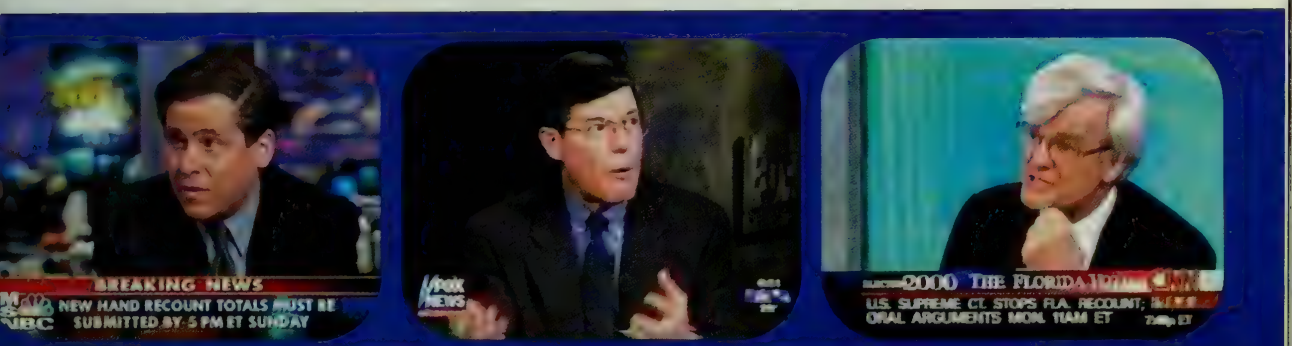
Each pundit must turn himself into a one-man or -woman rapid-response machine, a compact version of the Clinton-Gore model. But the necessity to speak fast doesn't entail the necessity to speak LOUD. A pundit can raise his voice on occasion as long as it doesn't become a persistent foghorn.

The decline of John McLaughlin is instructive. A former speechwriter and special assistant to Presidents Nixon and Ford and an editor and columnist for the *National Review,* McLaughlin launched *The McLaughlin Group* in 1982. From the outset his band of pundits—which included the Prince of Darkness, Robert Novak—buffaloed through the modest compunctions and courtesies that characterized stodgier public-affairs shows such as *Washington Week in Review* and *Agronsky & Company* (whose verbal footdragging was hilariously lampooned by

Michael Kinsley in *The New Republic*). McLaughlin redefined the genre, and the panel itself took their act on the road, playing corporate events. The group's recognition factor peaked when *Saturday Night Live* parodied the show, with Dana Carvey imitating McLaughlin's stentorian boom and gavel-rapping verdicts ("*Wrong!*"), asking absurd round-robin questions, and ringing innumerable bananafana changes on Kondracke's name ("Mort-on Salt, when-it-rains-it-pours . . . what say you? . . . *Wrong!*"). McLaughlin took the wrong lesson from the satire. He seemed to believe that the skit's whopping success signified that audiences found his excesses endearing: he became even more of a caricature after Carvey's send-up, as if to show he was in on the joke and, what's more, could top it. For a man already riddled with hubris, priding himself as a mirth-maker was the folly of follies. As the show grew into a franchise, *The McLaughlin Group* began to drown in its host's chicken fat. McLaughlin's introductions became longer and fuller of thunderation, his choice of topics even more arbitrary and capricious; he imperiously played musical chairs with the panelists, antagonizing Novak and Germond until they finally defected. In Germond's memoir, *Fat Man in a Middle Seat,* he recalls how McLaughlin assumed the airs of a self-appointed caesar in the studio and on the road, hogging the money and sliding into a chauffeured limo while the other panelists had to pile into a van. His top-heavy ego eventually took its toll. In recent years, ratings for *The McLaughlin Group* have sunk like a damaged submarine, McLaughlin himself becoming a rusty relic, a dull roar.

His mouth has been supplanted by Chris Matthews's on *Hardball.* It's Matthews who is now the alpha-male master at talking over his guests, tackling their responses in mid-sentence, and free-associating like Dutch Schultz on his deathbed. But Matthews may have heeded the warning of McLaughlin's meltdown: In November, *Saturday Night Live* did a parody of him, mocking his outboard-motor manner and compulsion to ratchet up every discussion into a screaming meemie. Unlike McLaughlin, Matthews didn't interpret the parody as a popular mandate. It seems to have chastened him. Since then he's toned down his demeanor, becoming a reasonable facsimile of a rational person. On *Charlie Rose* recently, he seemed almost . . . calm. If he can continue to adapt, he'll be able to dodge the nickname of "Old Yeller."

To be a pundit is to forgo quixotic crusades for a hard-boiled cynicism.



FACE TIME: Jonathan Alter on MSNBC, Mort Kondracke on Fox News, and Al Hunt on *The Capital Gang.*

8. Don't Merely Give Advice—Help Gum Up the Works!

"I can speak to almost anything with a lot of authority," Fred Barnes is quoted as saying with pathead complacency in Eric Alterman's *Sound and Fury: The Making of the Punditocracy.* Speaking with authority on everything from global warming to the ripple effects of Viagra is vital to a pundit's aura of offhand infallibility. A pundit is someone who knows exactly how hard Alan Greenspan should tap on the brakes to glide the economy to a soft landing, what the price of gas should be at the pump, where and how NATO forces should be stationed, and whether Microsoft should be compelled to unbundle its browser. You'll never hear a pundit confess, "Man, the Mideast, what a mess—glad it's not my problem." But sometimes it isn't enough to be a nimble know-it-all. Crucial moments in the course of human events require a more active meddling.

On Election Night, NBC and *Newsweek*'s Jonathan Alter boldly stepped forward to help ball everything up. Only a week and a half earlier, Alter had told viewers of the *Today* show, "As many Americans know, the person with the most votes doesn't necessarily win. The election is decided by the electoral college." But on Election Night he flabbergasted Tom Brokaw (not an easy thing to do) and Tim Russert at the anchor desk by contending, "If it turns out that Al Gore wins the popular vote nationally, there will be intense pressure in this country to have him become the president. Most people think the guy with the most votes wins. The political pressure would mount quickly to certify Al Gore as the winner." Whoa! cried Brokaw and Russert, quickly dismissing this scenario and reasserting the primacy of the electoral college. "Yet in that moment, as his seniors smacked him down," wrote John J. Miller in the *National Review,* "Alter laid out what has become Gore's post-election strategy: denigrating an outcome in which Bush wins by the rules but not by a popular vote. Alter was on-message, even before there was a message to be on." And thus served as the advance scout guiding the Gore mule team and the electoral process into the Florida swamps and the morass of multiple lawsuits and political stalemate.

Way to go, guy!

9. Insulate Yourself from "the Little People"

Sometimes, sadly, to make new friends you must leave old friends behind. To become a successful pundit means saying good-bye to all "the little people" you used to know, those superfluous souls who aren't on TV and fill in the space in the fly-over zone lying between the power triangle of D.C.-N.Y.-L.A. From now on the average American belongs to a vast, vague abstraction known as "the American people," which is subdivided

into cardboard-cutout cartoons such as soccer moms, former Reagan Democrats, and urban Bobos, and whose domestic concerns fall under the patronizing category of "kitchen-table topics." (Pundits love to picture families gathering around the kitchen table to discuss prescription-drug benefits.) These residents of Munchkin Land need not concern you, since you'll never have to meet them in the flesh, except in airports or town meetings where the caste system has broken down. Once you've joined the journalistic in-crowd and done your first of many E-mail chats on *Slate,* it's time to draw the curtain in the first-class compartment. Where a reporter like Haynes Johnson used to take palm readings of the masses to support his woolly platitudes (in Kinsley's parody of *Agronsky & Company,* he was Haynes Underwear, solemnly pronouncing, "For me to pass among the American people at this fleet-babble, but a collusion, a nexus of converging interests. Corporate sponsors underwrite the pundit's affluenza; they're the ones buying the ads (where would Sunday-morning Washington talk shows be without those G.E. spots?), hosting the business conventions and expos, and sharing the skybox with your media bosses. It's only natural that the pundit class would eventually gravitate to management's point of view while offering lip service to "the mood of the people." How can you align yourself with the workers when they keep losing your luggage? Led by Robert Novak, sneers at labor bosses have become a common slur in the pundit libretto. Germond states that McLaughlin was furious when he refused to cross a union picket line to tape the show. A fellow panelist, the supposed neo-liberal Kondracke, had no qualms about crossing the line (or sneaking around it), claiming the unions were "way out of control." Any-Conason, who was the Michael Corleone to Jack Newfield's Godfather at *The Village Voice,* or the humorless tax-cut militant Grover Norquist—aren't as welcome in the banquet hall as more congenial spirits. They're booked, but not asked to join the regular roundtable. And then someday they won't be asked back anymore, and they'll sit in their lonely apartments, cursing the darkness.

A question from the floor:

—Are there any pundits you can recommend? Ones I could emulate without hating myself?

Yes. William Kristol of *The Weekly Standard.* He's civil, sheepishly self-deprecating (as befits Dan Quayle's former chief of staff), willing to depart from the Republican script and entertain doubts and contrary findings (unlike his associate at *The Weekly Standard,* Fred Barnes, who's squandered the journalistic



TALKING SENSE: William Kristol on *Today,* Anna Quindlen on *Charlie Rose,* and James Warren on MSNBC.

The old Walter Lippmann formalities have gone kaput. Chat is king.

ing yet crucial moment in history, touching an outstretched hand here, accepting a gentle kiss on the foot there, was as stirring and moving for me as a journalist as it was for them as the American people"), today such dirty work can be shunned through the mediation of polls. Every pundit must be as conversant with polls and pollsters as a market analyst is with support levels and significant tops, able to divine the deeper booga-booga of conflicting numbers issuing from Zogby and Rasmussen. "Well, as you know, Brit, polls taken on Friday nights skew Democratic since more Democrats are likely to be home watching *The Fugitive.*" ("Skew"—a key verb in the pundit's vocabulary.)

Polling data are the white noise of political discourse, a jamming device to make public opinion seem decisive when it's corporate money calling the shots. It's not a conspiracy, this nonstop numbers thing that inconveniences Mort is clearly the mark of anarchy.

10. Always End with a Hearty Chuckle

Pundit spats should never be taken personally. Ripping off your lapel mike and stomping out of the studio may feel good and look macho, but it will tend to cut down on future invitations. Remember, you and your fellow panelists belong to the same V.I.P. club—practice collegiality; tease but don't torment. Nearly every broadcast of *Crossfire* and *The Capital Gang* ends with everyone enjoying a no-hard-feelings chuckle as the credits roll. Chuckling isn't as easy as it looks: to convey the shallows of phony bonhomie calls for a relaxed diaphragm and a nice twinkle. (Note the evident strain of the guests on *Washington Week in Review* laughing gamely at one another's toothless whimsies.) Pundits incapable of producing a fade-out chuckle—such as Joe credibility he built up at *The New Republic*), and he doesn't need to be grilled over an open flame to admit he's made a bum prediction. Whoever made the decision to drop him from the lineup of ABC's *This Week* deserves a dunce cap. James Warren of the *Chicago Tribune* has a sardonic, deadpan delivery. Bill Press started promisingly as the left side of *Crossfire,* but seems to be cashing in his brain cells as co-host of CNN's *The Spin Room,* where he and the self-enamored Tucker Carlson (who yips at his own jokes) field phone calls and E-mails from ignoramuses. *Newsweek*'s Anna Quindlen and *The Nation*'s editor, Katrina vanden Heuvel, were quite forceful on *Charlie Rose*'s coverage of the second presidential debate. And of course there's our own excoriating Christopher Hitchens.

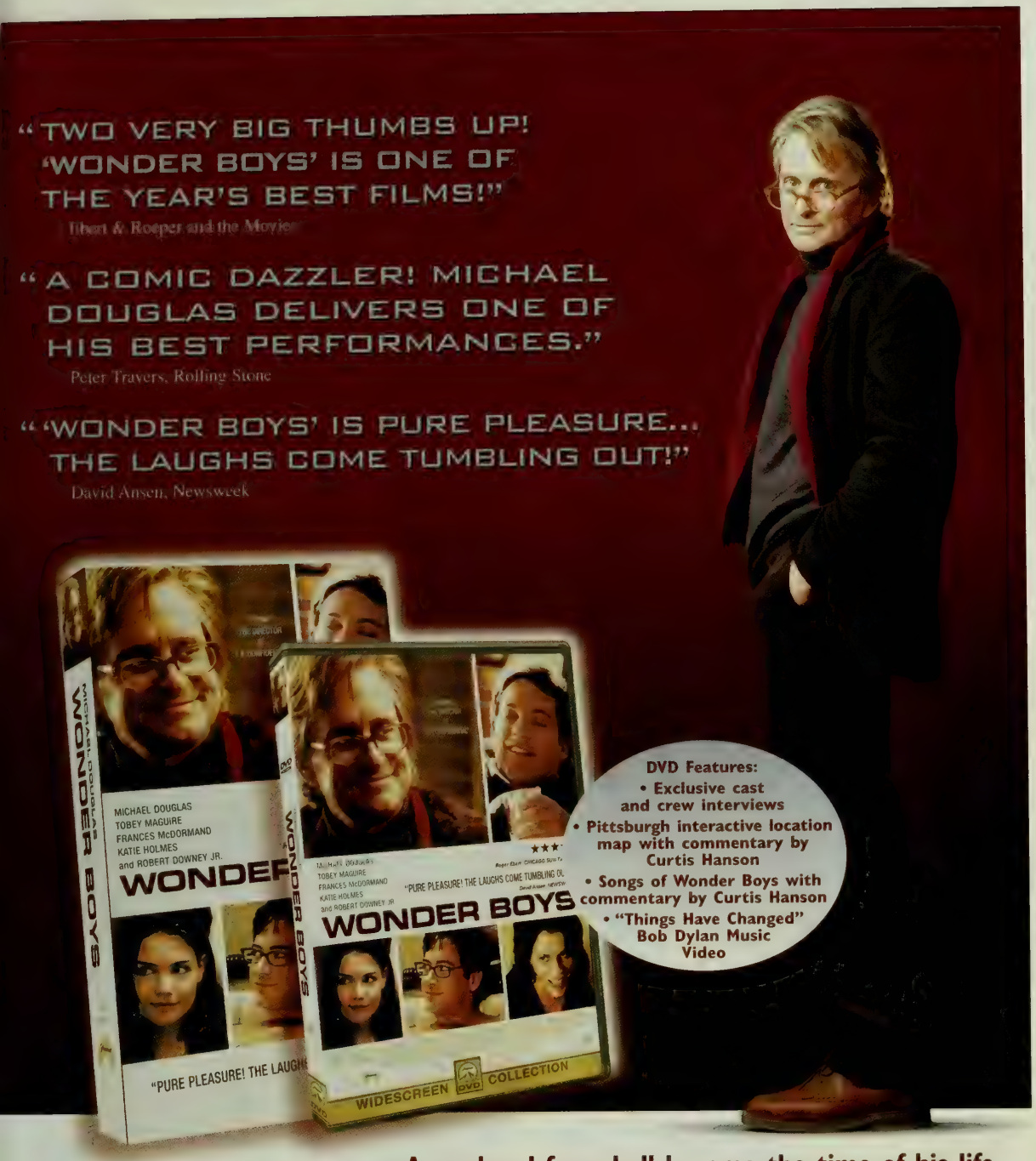
That's about it.

Any other questions? Good. Now go out there and hit the hair spray! □

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Peter Travers, Rolling Stone

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David Ansen, Newsweek



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MOTHER COURA Ruth Gruber, cente her war correspon uniform, escorts Je orphans to the Un States on the SS *Uruguay*, May 194 *Inset*, Gruber and Natasha Richardso the *Haven* set.



MAGNIFICENT VOYAGE

In 1944, with a temporary commission as a general, 32-year-old reporter Ruth Gruber brought 1,000 World War II refugees to America aboard a U.S. military transport ship. That journey, recounted in her book *Haven* and now in a CBS mini-series, inspired Gruber's still-vital career as a warrior of word and image

BY MAUREEN ORTH

A halo of yellow hair frames her penetrating blue eyes, which miss nothing. At 89, the diminutive author and lecturer Ruth Gruber is about to get the full star treatment. She leans forward to peer into the TV screen, having taken time from a cross-country book tour to come to Manhattan and view a video of Natasha Richardson playing her as she was in 1944, in a two-part mini-series CBS is airing this month. *Haven* is based on a true story, and Gruber is the heroine of what she calls "the best-kept secret of World War II." A few minutes into the first tape, she spots herself and her daughter, Celia, flashing by in a nanosecond; they are extras in a scene depicting nearly 1,000 desperate, mostly Jewish refugees from the Holocaust waiting to board the U.S. ship *Henry Gibbins*. They were the only such group ever permitted to enter the United States during the war, and Gruber was, in the words of a surviving refugee, "the angel who delivered us." "I wasn't aware of how active the U.S. administration was in not allowing Jewish refugees into the country," says Natasha Richardson. "I considered it an honor and a duty to be part of telling this story."

"There were 7,000 extras, and so many actors came up and threw their arms around me," says Gruber. "They said, 'I told my agent I had to be here.' One woman had lost her parents in the Holo-

NSET BY CAROL HALEBIAN


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caust. Another said her G.I. father's dog tag was found in Dachau." Filmed at a cost of $15 million, *Haven* is based on Gruber's recently reissued book of the same name. Gruber, who was 32 in 1944 and had been raised in a "modern" Orthodox Jewish household in Brooklyn, considers the voyage the transforming moment of her life.

Gruber was precocious and prescient. By age 20 she had already returned home from studying abroad for her Ph.D., and was the youngest American at that time with a doctorate. Her thesis on Virginia Woolf, written at the University of Cologne, had won her honors; while studying in Germany, she had also witnessed Hitler's demented hysteria firsthand at Nazi rallies and recognized his potential danger. In 1935, after receiving a fellowship to study women under Fascism, Communism, and democracy, she set off for Russia, having convinced the *New York Herald Tribune*'s editor that if he gave her the chance she could be the first foreign correspondent to gain entry to the Soviet Arctic. Traveling mostly in unheated, unpressurized, two-seat seaplanes, Gruber spent eight months in the northernmost reaches of Siberia, interviewing prisoners of Stalin's work camps as well as the area's most stalwart pioneers. She sent her dispatches—which did not always arrive—by remote radiophone. The result was *I Went to the Soviet Arctic,* published in 1939 and illustrated mostly with her own photographs. Much of the material in it was also included in Gruber's 1991 autobiography, *Ahead of Time,* which Carroll & Graf is reissuing this month.

"Franklin Roosevelt didn't want the New Deal to be known as 'the Jew Deal,'" Ruth Gruber says.

Gruber determined to go next to the northernmost point of Alaska, just a few miles from the Russian Arctic she already knew. Her Soviet book had brought her to the attention of Franklin Roosevelt's secretary of the interior, Harold L. Ickes, who wrote in his diary that Dr. Ruth Gruber was "quite good looking. I could not quite make out whether she is Jewish or not." He perceived, however, that "she is an imperious young woman who does not stand on ceremony and wants to have her own way." At Gruber's request, Ickes sent her to be his eyes and ears in the Far North, figuring out how to publicize Alaska and attract homesteaders. When America entered World War II in December 1941, Gruber was flying or dogsledding across the tundra by day and hostessing dinners for the military command at night. "I wore out more evening gowns in Alaska in a year and a half than in a lifetime," she tells me. At one point in 1942, she was supposed to take off for Nome with a bush pilot but was delayed while a cable from Ickes was being decoded. "I'm sorry, I can't wait for you," the pilot told her. "I've got other passengers." "They got on the plane and crashed," Gruber says. "He flew into a mountain. So Ickes saved my life."

Later, in Washington, she became friendly with Eleanor Roosevelt and answered all letters pertaining to Alaska for the First Lady. But she agonized as the United States stood largely mute while Hitler's persecution of Jews went on unabated. "Franklin Roosevelt didn't want the New Deal to be known as 'the Jew Deal,'" Gruber explains. "He didn't want people saying we were fighting the war for Jews." Finally, in January 1944, Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau Jr. showed Roosevelt a special report based on secret cables to the State Department from Switzerland and originally titled "Report to the Secretary on the Acquiescence of This Government in the Murder of the Jews." Only then did the Roosevelt administration decide to bring in a group of mostly Jewish refugees and house them in an abandoned army camp in Oswego, New York—but only after they had signed papers promising that they would go back where they had come from at the war's end. The Interior Department, which was already presiding over the internment of hundreds of thousands of Japanese-Americans, was in charge of these European refugees, who were set to embark from the bay of Naples in July 1944, much to the chagrin of some individuals in the U.S. State Department, who appeared to be overtly anti-Semitic. Fluent in German, Yiddish, and Russian, Gruber begged Ickes to let her escort the refugees to America.

As a young woman untested in combat, she knew she would face strong opposition from the State Department and Congress, but her most powerful foe was her own mother, the obdurate Gussie Gruber (played by Anne Bancroft in the mini-series), whose willfulness Ruth had spent her whole life trying to escape. Gussie personally went to Washington to vent her ire at Ickes (played by Hal H brook) for allowing her daughter to dertake such a dangerous mission. Ickes had thought of an ingenious p to help Ruth if she were taken prisoner sea. "Don't worry," Gruber recalls Ick telling her mother, "she'll come ho safe. We're making her a general." A cording to the rules of the Geneva c ventions, captured generals could not harmed by the enemy and had to clothed and fed. Ruth's papers identifi her as a "simulated general." "That a signment on the ship changed the cours of my whole life," Gruber says. "I kne my life was inextricably bound with re cuing people and survival."

On the ship, which was part of a conv pursued by U-boats and German plane Gruber became "Mother Ruth" to the de astated escapees, who did not speak En glish and who poured out their horror st ries to her. She also acted as a go-betwee with the wounded G.I.'s on board, who a first resented the refugees, irrationall blaming them for causing a Nazi air at tack on the convoy. She had to be every where at once, tending to her overwrought charges and smoothing relations between the two groups. Once in Oswego, however, she had to witness the refugees' wrath as they were quarantined for a month and interrogated. These brave survivors, many of them highly educated, were once again locked up behind barbed-wire fences, and Gruber was unable to persuade the government bureaucracy to allow them to do any work except farm labor, for which they were paid the same as a group of Nazi war prisoners kept nearby—80 cents a day. It was only after Franklin Roosevelt's death that President Harry Truman permitted the refugees to be bused across the border into Canada so that they could obtain valid visas and legally re-enter the United States.

That experience forged Gruber into a warrior advocate, using both words and photos as her weapons. Her detailed reports were often models of the late *Washington Post* publisher Philip Graham's definition of journalism: "the first rough draft of history." "Fortunately, I never took a course in journalism," says Gruber, "so I never knew you were supposed to be objective. All I knew was that I had to live the story to write it, and not only live it—if it was a story of injustice, I had to fight it."

"To be the Dorothy Thompson of Jewish journalists is to be in a niche within a niche," says Gruber's book editor, Philip Turner, of Carroll & Graf, comparing her to the celebrated journalist for the *New York Herald Tribune* who interviewed


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Hitler and wrote a syndicated column for 170 newspapers. Although Gruber is highly regarded inside the United Jewish Appeal and Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America—she has raised hundreds of millions of dollars for Israel, on a par with the late Israeli premier Golda Meir—her groundbreaking reporting on the birth of Israel, particularly, was often ignored or appropriated by others. For example, the second defining experience of Gruber's life, after the one described in *Haven*, formed the basis for her 1948 book, *Exodus 1947: The Ship That Launched a Nation*. For years Leon Uris freely acknowledged how much he had been influenced by Gruber in writing *Exodus*, his best-selling novel, published in 1958. Gruber recalls that shortly before producer-director Otto Preminger's epic movie of the same name, starring Paul Newman and Eva Marie Saint, was released in 1960, Uris got up onstage at the Hadassah Convention in San Francisco, where he and Gruber were appearing before a large crowd, to "tell a story on Ruth."

According to Gruber, Uris told the audience that Preminger had asked Uris to send him all the books he had used as sources in writing *Exodus*. Uris naturally sent him Gruber's book, and when Preminger next called him, the flamboyant director said, "If I had read this book first, I never would have bought yours." Moreover, Preminger used material from Gruber's book that was not even mentioned in Uris's. As it happened, Gruber had already been invited to the New York premiere when she met Preminger and asked him if the Uris story was true. "It's absolutely true," Preminger confirmed. "And you know what I'm going to do for you?" "I was thinking to myself, Maybe he's going to give me credit," Gruber recalls. Instead, Preminger told her, "I'm going to give you two tickets to see the opening of the movie."

The path to publishing *Exodus 1947* had been fraught with peril. In 1946, while Gruber was still working for Ickes, she was asked by the *New York Post* to go to London and report on the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry on Palestine, the commission formed to study whether or not Jewish Holocaust survivors warehoused in displaced-persons camps throughout Europe should be allowed to enter Palestine to create a Jewish state. Once again Gruber, traveling with the commission to Germany, Austria, Egypt, and Palestine, witnessed the conditions of Jews in these awful camps, which had not improved even after the end of the war. The British, who governed Palestine under a mandate from the League of Nations to create a Jewish homeland, sided with Arab leaders, who were unalterably opposed to Jewish immigration. After overturning the commission's unanimous recommendation to allow 100,000 displaced persons into Palestine—the position favored by the United States—the British government instead asked the United Nations to take over the rule of Palestine. That decision was the basis for another commission Gruber covered for the *Herald Tribune*, the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP).

Gruber abandoned UNSCOP in July 1947, cabling her editors, ANYBODY CAN COVER SPEECHES. She had heard of a former American ship, renamed *Exodus 1947* and carrying 4,500 illegal refugees, which had been attacked in international waters by a British naval force. After a three-hour battle in which 150 were wounded and three died, the *Exodus* was forced to limp into the port of Haifa, its destination in Palestine. Gruber caught up with the ship at the dock. The British had set up a blockade and were sending the displaced persons away on three closely guarded "hospital ships," which actually functioned as prison ships. At first it was thought the refugees would be transferred to a squalid camp in Cyprus, but after a three-week stay in scorching heat in Port-de-Bouc, a harbor city in southern France—where the refugees adamantly refused to disembark, even though the sympathetic French promised them food, shelter, and medical attention—the British sent them back to English prison camps in northern Germany. In other words, back to hell. Gruber's photo of the refugees' unfurled Union Jack with a swastika painted on it became *Life* magazine's Picture of the Week.

About 1,000 negatives of her photos from that era are now in the Holocaust Memorial Museum archives in Washington, D.C., with more than 100 prints on display. But it is Gruber's brilliant and

"I had to live the story to write it, and not only live it—if it was a story of injustice, I had to fight it."

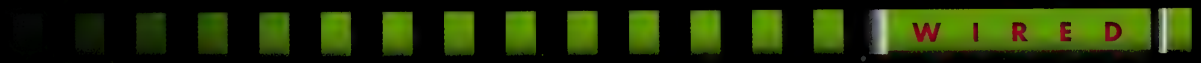






ACTIVE WITNESS
From left: Gruber on a seaplane in Siberia, reporting on the Soviet Arctic for the *New York Herald Tribune*, 1936; a Gruber photograph of the Holocaust refugees aboard the *Henry Gibbins*, 1944; Gruber in 1950, at Grossingers, the Catskills resort, lecturing on the refugees' internment in Oswego, New York.

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painstaking reportage in *Exodus 1947* that is overwhelming. She not only explains the plotting and the politics precisely but also re-creates the heat, the filth, the despair, and the total defiance of people who have moved beyond suffering in pursuit of their goal of settling in a Jewish state. At one point she is unwittingly chosen by the British to be the lone American press person to go aboard one of the ships in Port-de-Bouc.

"Below us was the cage," Gruber writes in the book. "Squeezed between a green toilet shed and some steel plates were hundreds and hundreds of half-naked people who looked as though they had been thrown together into a dog pound. For a moment I had the hideous feeling they were barking. Trapped and lost, they were shouting at us in all languages, shattering one another's words."

Ironically, Gruber's original reporting, titled "Destination Palestine: The Story of the Haganah Ship *Exodus 1947*," was a 128-page manuscript written for *The New Yorker* and edited by the legendary William Shawn, who had not yet taken over as editor in chief. One day over lunch at the Algonquin Hotel, Shawn had some bad news for Gruber: Raoul Fleischmann, the magazine's Jewish owner, had read her piece and rejected it. "He told me Fleischmann said it was 'too Jewish.' Then he said, 'I called my friend Bruce Bliven at *The New Republic*, and sight unseen he said he would publish it.' They ran it in several issues." Gruber was also able to publish her *Exodus* story as a book.

Harry Truman told Gruber, "We'd have no problems in the Middle East if not for that dirty three-letter word: 'o-i-l.'"

Years later Gruber interviewed Harry Truman, after he had retired to Missouri. He told her, "We'd have no problems in the Middle East if not for that dirty three-letter word: 'o-i-l.'"

To this day, none of Gruber's books that mention the British role in the creation of Israel has been published in England.

"Weren't you bitter?," Natasha Richardson asked Ruth Gruber when they met. The answer is and always has been no. "I always felt at the *Herald Tribune*, why are they *paying* me?," Gruber said when I asked if she felt overlooked. "I would give a million dollars to go to some of these places." Richardson had told me. "You'd think with all the doors being closed in her face, there'd be an anger, a bitterness. But instead there is just an enormous, pulsating heart."

Gruber was the rebellious fourth child of five siblings. Her father, David, owned a liquor store in Brooklyn, and her parents placed great value on faith and education. "Religion very much clothed my life as a child," Gruber says. "If I ever did anything wrong, I would go to the window and ask God to excuse me three times. He was a living presence for me, and he always excused me." She was six when she first felt the power of language, listening to her first-grade teacher, a young African-American woman, recite poetry. "It sounded like the most beautiful music, and that's when I knew I loved words and they would be a part of me." The teacher once paid a surprise visit to the Gruber house, the purpose of which, Gussie instantly assumed, was to report Ruth's misconduct. "She didn't do anything wrong," the teacher said. "I just want to tell you to be very careful of her. She is going to be a writer."

Throughout her early years, Gruber was blessed with caring teachers who recognized her gifts and encouraged her. One high-school teacher, an African-American man, sometimes took her to the theater on Saturdays. "He wanted me to learn about oppression. We saw Eugene O'Neill's *All God's Chillun Got Wings*." She entered New York University at 15, and her English professor, an Irish woman, sent some of her compositions to *Harper's Weekly* and *The Atlantic Monthly*, which rejected them. "She was very consoling—took me to lunch, taught me how to eat fish properly, and said, 'Don't think about this. Just keep writing.'"

Gruber finished N.Y.U. in three years and at 18 received a fellowship to study for a master's in German literature at the University of Wisconsin. During Easter vacation she learned that she had been offered another fellowship, to pursue her Ph.D. for one year in Germany. She knew her mother would have objections, and quickly decided to confront her in person. She hitchhiked as far as Albany and asked her parents to pick her up at Grand Central Terminal. Gussie immediately jumped to the conclusion that Ruth was coming home to announce she was pregnant. When her mother heard instead that Ruth wanted to study in Germany, she told her husband, "I wish she was pregnant."

In 1932, at the height of the Depression, Gruber returned from Germany to find a gaggle of reporters waiting at the dock in New York to interview her about her feat of completing a doctorate at such a young age. Her youthful accomplishment had already been recognized in Europe; she had even been awarded a gift to honor her by the then mayor of Cologne, Konrad Adenauer. But she fled the reporters in tears, not wanting publicity. Jobs were scarce as Gruber tried to find writing assignments, and she longed to escape from Gussie and live the bohemian life in Greenwich Village. One night at Romany Marie's, a popular Village watering hole, Gruber and a girlfriend were asked to join the table of the noted Arctic explorer Vilhjalmur Stefansson, who soon hired Gruber to translate research on the Arctic for him for a dollar an hour. "Until I started translating all these documents, I didn't know anything about the Arctic," she says. "He taught me to be skeptical about everything, because he was a great myth breaker, and he really made me love the Arctic and frontiers."

Her intrepid reporting from the Arctic a few years later made Gruber a great favorite of Helen Reid, the socially prominent owner of the *Herald Tribune*, who often invited her to dine and speak in her various homes. Gruber never actually had an office at the *Herald Tribune*. "I didn't need one," she says. "I would see something and decide that was a story I had to cover. They would always say, 'Do it.' And as soon as I came back, Helen would say, 'Come up to Purchase [New York, where Reid had a country house].' We'd get down on the floor. She'd put a big map down, and she would live the whole story. It was such fun."

Gruber did not marry until she was 39. Through her work for the Interior Department, she had become friendly with Puerto Rico's first elected governor, Luis Muñoz Marín. During one of the parties surrounding his inauguration in San Juan in 1949, he introduced Gruber to Philip Michaels, a lawyer eight years older than she, who managed a furniture store in the South Bronx, where he also functioned as a community organizer. They married in 1951, and when she became pregnant for the first time, at 40, her family and doctors advised an abortion. Gruber refused. Her daughter, Celia, a former videotape editor for CBS living in London, was born in 1952, and her son, David, two years later. He is an assistant secretary at the Department of Energy in Washington, in charge of the $1.9 billion entitlement to compensate workers who have been exposed to radioactive material.

"I went with her on most trips," David



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Michaels recalls of his early childhood. Gruber was then writing a regular column, "Diary of an American Housewife," for Hadassah's monthly magazine and traveling to Israel every year, where she was on familiar terms with all the major leaders. In the 60s, Gruber published two books on Puerto Rico. Then, in 1968, Philip Michaels died. Gruber continued to raise money for Israel and became known as a spellbinding speaker, especially on the subject of the *Haven* experience. "I've heard her over and over," says her friend Sylvia Miller, a former Hadassah board member, "and so many times seen her hold an audience in the palm of her hand."

Time and again, Gruber, who had saved all her notebooks and documentation from the Oswego days, tried to interest her book editors in the stirring episode of World War II that so moved audiences. "'World War II?' they'd say. 'Who gives a damn? Refugees? Who cares?'"

In 1974, Gruber got married again, to Henry Rosner, New York's deputy commissioner of human resources, who had begun his career under former mayor Fiorello La Guardia. That year she also published a book, *They Came to Stay,* a collaboration with former congresswoman Marjorie Margolies-Mezvinsky, who had adopted two Asian babies. Gruber and her daughter traveled to Vietnam during the war there and also to Korea to do the research for the book. Then, after Rosner's retirement in 1976, she and Rosner spent nearly a year in Israel, where Gruber wrote *Raquela,* which tells the history of Israel through the life of a ninth-generation Jerusalem midwife. It became a best-seller, and the profits afforded her the opportunity to write *Haven,* which was published to rave reviews in 1983.

Then, in a most unlikely location, another wave of persecuted Jewish refugees appeared for Gruber to chronicle—in Ethiopia. In 1985, destitute black Jews were being airlifted to Israel for resettlement. Gruber was now 75 years old and once again a widow. To get her story, she had to travel to remote Ethiopian villages, first in drought conditions, later through driving rain and mud slides. She called the resulting book *Rescue.* In her 80s, she has published her autobiography and revised both *Exodus 1947* and *Haven,* which carries a foreword by her niece, Dava Sobel, the author of *Longitude* and *Galileo's Daughter.*

Last Thanksgiving, I caught up with Ruth Gruber in the midst of a tour which, in a single week, had taken her to Texas, Michigan, and Connecticut to publicize her books. When I rang the doorbell of her apartment on Central Park West, where she has lived for 49 years, I knew she would have a limited time to talk, because she was going to a black-tie dinner that night at the Pierre Hotel.

She opened the door to greet me in a fire-engine-red, floor-length hostess gown and gold slippers. She was carefully groomed and jeweled, warm, gracious, and acute, and most eager to talk about the impressive accomplishments of the surviving *Haven* refugees, with whom she still keeps in close touch one, she told me, helped invent magnetic-resonance imaging (M.R.I.). Her modest apartment is filled with mementos and a floor-to-ceiling museum case of Arctic, Alaskan, Middle Eastern, and African artifacts. One hallway is lined with her photos, including pictures of the Oswego camp, part of which is being turned into a museum, with its library named for Ruth Gruber. She served me an aperitif of Amaretto mixed with peach-and-carrot juice.

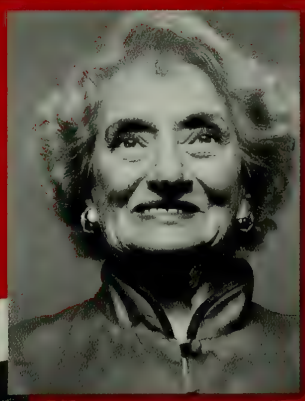
The next day we dined at My Most Favorite Dessert Co., a kosher restaurant in the theater district owned by Doris Schechter, who was only five years old when she crossed the Atlantic with Gruber on the refugee ship *Henry Gibbins.* Schechter considers Gruber a second mother and "a national treasure."

During the ride back to her apartment, Gruber told me about her plans to go on the CBS press tour with Natasha Richardson to publicize *Haven.* She was also about to deliver a lecture at the United Nations on Eleanor Roosevelt. In addition, she informed me, she is getting ready to start her 16th book, about the five most fascinating women she has ever known, including Eleanor Roosevelt, Golda Meir, and Lena Horne.

Never entertaining for a moment the notion that she might be ready to end an exciting, 70-year career in journalism, Ruth Gruber is still ready to deliver the next story. □



Leon Uris freely acknowledged how much *Exodus* had been influenced by Gruber.





WARRIOR ADVOCATE
From far left: Gruber's famous photograph of Holocaust survivors from the *Exodus 1947* being sent back to Germany by the British and protesting by painting a swastika on the Union Jack, August 1947; another Gruber photo, of Romanian refugees landing in Haifa, the Palestinian port, 1947; Gruber photographed in New York, November 17, 2000.



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BLAST FROM THE PAST

The George Clooney remake of *Fail-Safe* was followed by Showtime's update of *On the Beach*, the Broadway hit *Copenhagen*, and now the feature *Thirteen Days*, starring Kevin Costner, about the Cuban missile crisis. Are we indulging in a perverse nostalgia for Cold War cliff-hangers, mushroom clouds, and mutually assured destruction?

BY BRUCE HANDY



GONE FISSION
The atomic-bomb test at Bikini Atoll, July 24, 1946. *Inset*, Nikita Khrushchev and John F. Kennedy in Vienna, 1961—a year before they nearly cinderized creation.

INSET BY BRUDER BASCH, DIGITAL CORPORATION

You don't see a lot of mushroom clouds these days—which is not a complaint, just an observation. But that unfamiliarity suggests why the producers of *Thirteen Days*, the recently released film about the Cuban missile crisis, chose to begin their movie with stock footage of rocket launches and A-bomb blasts. The point, presumably, is to remind contemporary audiences—who may not even remember the fall of the Berlin Wall, let alone Doomsday scenarios—of just what was at stake in October 1962 when the Kennedy administration caught the Soviet Union sneaking nuclear warheads and medium-range missiles into Cuba and both sides subsequently came as close as they ever did to setting off World War III. And so, as the movie opens, bomb after bomb detonates, iridescent flashes followed by towering clouds, their long stalks topped with smoke-blossoms of an angry, oily intensity that look more like broccoli than mushrooms (but "mushroom cloud" does have a nice, onomatopoeic ring). The film's music cues us to feel dutifully uneasy, yet you can't help but enjoy the montage on a purely visual level: the explosions are dazzling, the best light show the Pentagon can buy. If you didn't know each one had the explosive force of God knows how many mega-tons of TNT, and fogged the atmosphere with God knows how much radioactive ash, you might even think they were wondrous in a scary, force-of-nature way, like a tornado or Liza Minnelli. You can certainly see why, back in the allegedly more innocent 1950s, the word "atomic" became a kind of commercial synonym for pep, why Count Basie used a photo of a mushroom cloud on the cover of his 1957 album $E=MC^2$. Talk about swing.

The release of *Thirteen Days* nearly a decade after the dismantling of the Soviet Union poses an implicit question: even though the nuclear threat has hardly disappeared (together, the U.S. and Russia presently have about 13,000 nuclear warheads; that's down from more than 20,000 at the Cold War's height, but still . . .), are

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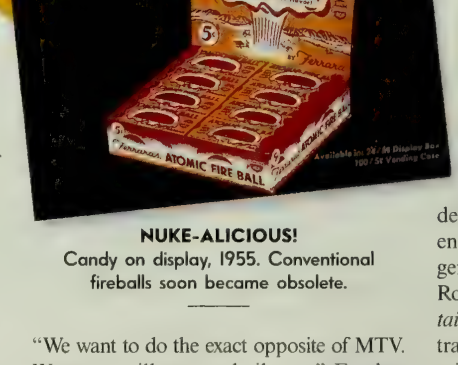
say something real this valentine's day. fresh ink. in stores now.

we now prepared to feel a kind of perverse nostalgia for the Bomb, as it used to be called back in the days of the Pill and the Method? Do we harbor a wistfulness for such now quaintly evocative terms as "first-strike capability" and "mutually assured destruction," for the bygone iconography of silos and bomber wings, for MIRVs and ICBMs, NORAD and SAC, for hot lines and war rooms and U.N. debates that actually mattered—even for the prospect, attendant in all this, of our own extinction? The makers of *Thirteen Days* are, in fact, counting on a certain historic resonance, if not quite unalloyed nostalgia, to sell their account of how the world almost ended. "Potentially this is a family film," said Peter Almond, one of the producers of *Thirteen Days,* discussing with me what the film's market research had turned up in the weeks preceding its release. "People in their 40s want to share this with their children, this experience of what the most terrifying aspect of the Cold War, the nuclear threat, was like. They want to pass on their experience the way *Saving Private Ryan* brought World War II back to the nation's consciousness." In other words, baby-boomers may not have had D-day, but duck-and-cover drills weren't nothing.

As it happens, we are in the midst of a small though distinct nuclear boomlet in the popular arts. Only last spring CBS aired a remake, produced by and starring George Clooney, of the 1964 film *Fail-Safe,* a cautionary tale in which an inexplicable technological boner sends American warheads whistling first toward Moscow and then, by way of an apology, Manhattan. Hard on that project's heels was Showtime's remake of *On the Beach,* the 1959 film (based on Nevil Shute's 1957 novel) set in a post–World War III Australia that has become civilization's last outpost of alcoholism and bad dialogue. On Broadway, meanwhile, the current Tony Award winner for best play, Michael Frayn's *Copenhagen,* is a cerebral drama about the science behind the atomic bomb and the morality of having puzzled it out. The real proof of a cultural trend, however, is whether anyone is exploiting it for commerce, and my own spasmodic television viewing has turned up a couple of recent nuclear-themed ads: a spot for IBM in which a group of Japanese businessmen meet in a conference room that explicitly recalls *Dr. Strangelove*'s famous war-room set, and a spot for Sun Microsystems in which various offices are blown away by nuclear-blast-like shock waves. "Your competition will never know what hit them," explains an announcer, paraphrasing the physicist Edward Teller, father of the H-bomb.

The two TV remakes were curious works of pop-cultural archaeology. The impetus for exhuming *Fail-Safe,* Clooney told numerous interviewers, was his own morbid love of the original film, which was directed by Sidney Lumet and starred Henry Fonda as an earnest president and, improbably, Walter Matthau in the part of an amoral nuclear-arms expert. Clooney's new version, still set in the early 60s, was a unique hybrid: a cautionary period piece. The script was adapted from the Lumet movie by the original screenwriter, Walter Bernstein, and hewed closely to the first film; Clooney's production was also shot in black and white, as had been the film. "We are trying to make this old," Clooney told the *Los Angeles Times.*

Do we harbor a wistfulness for such now quaintly evocative terms as "first-strike capability"?



NUKE-ALICIOUS!
Candy on display, 1955. Conventional fireballs soon became obsolete.

"We want to do the exact opposite of MTV. We want stillness and silence." Further enhancing the retro-ness of it all was the fact that the two-hour production was broadcast live. In the ratings, *Fail-Safe* placed a respectable second to Regis Philbin's then indomitable *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire,* drawing 10 million viewers who, whether or not they were entertained or edified, could claim to have seen a unique fusion of the quaint and the horrific, an old-fashioned countdown to nuclear holocaust as embalmed and artificially cute, in its dark way, as one of those fake Eisenhower-era diners that are now replacing all the real ones in Los Angeles.

The makers of the new *On the Beach* at least made a slight effort to rethink their material: the 1959 film, like the novel, was set in the near future of 1964; the new film turned the calendar to 2006, denuding the project of any camp value—and so it was widely panned and left little trace in the public consciousness. The original was a far different affair. Produced and directed by Stanley Kramer—who made a career out of message films such as *The Defiant Ones* and *Judgment at Nuremberg*—*On the Beach* was conceived as a self-important film; indeed, self-importance was its guiding aesthetic—that and a stiff-upper-lip romantic fatalism borrowed from *Brief Encounter.* Kramer even arranged to have the film premiere simultaneously in 18 cities spanning the inhabited continents, from Moscow and New York to Tokyo and Paris. Linus Pauling, the chemist and Nobel Peace Prize winner, was quoted as saying, "It may be that some years from now we can look back and say that *On the Beach* is the movie that saved the world." To which Pauline Kael replied, in a 1965 essay on Kramer, "Six years have passed: does anyone remember *On the Beach* as anything more than a lousy movie?" Though windy and predictably lugubrious, it nevertheless worked as tragedy in the bluntest sort of way, since (1) everyone dies, even a baby, and (2) the roster of the doomed includes A-listers such as Ava Gardner, Fred Astaire, and Gregory Peck. The Showtime version's cast—Rachel Ward, Bryan Brown, and Armand Assante—was less upsettingly disposed of.

Thirteen Days obviously differs from these other projects in that it is not a cinematic op-ed piece but rather a drama based on a historic event, and thus one that has a happy ending—by definition, since someone is around to reenact it. The riveting and unusually intelligent two-and-a-half-hour film, directed by Roger Donaldson (*No Way Out* and *Cocktail*), takes us into the Kennedy administration's deliberations during the missile crisis. It stars Kevin Costner as the White House aide and Kennedy loyalist Kenny O'Donnell; by the time Khrushchev finally blinks, one has even gotten used to Costner's unusual Boston drawl, which seems taken in equal parts from Kennedy's real-life Irish mafia and from Costner's previous performance in *Bull Durham.* Though historians may quibble with some of the new film's particulars, they should largely be pleased, seeing as how *Thirteen Days* is the only movie in the last 40 years to presume that its audience has even a vague idea who Dean Acheson was.* Still, this is an $80 million Hollywood thriller, not a

*Harry Truman's secretary of state, if you're wondering. Are you? It's O.K. if you're not.

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Council on Foreign Relations seminar. The stakes alone give it a kind of dangerous, even sexy urgency—a hint of the early James Bond glamour that the Kennedys exploited in real life just as the filmmakers do here, what with top-secret satellite photos, stiff drinks, and sack-suited New Frontiersmen being whisked to and fro in sleek, black government limousines with impressive tail fins which, as it happens, were originally designed to mimic the erotic appeal of a guided missile.

That observation—that military hardware can have a certain fetishistic allure—was famously one of the central jokes of *Dr. Strangelove* (subtitled *How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*). Stanley Kubrick's 1964 black comedy ends with the bomber pilot played by Slim Pickens riding an H-bomb bucking-bronco style as it plummets toward ground zero—a warhead literally between his legs. Not that death and sex don't have a long and tangled history predating Los Alamos, but the prospect of extinction certainly focuses the libido, if one is inclined that way. The original *Fail-Safe* dallies in this vale in what must rank as one of the ickiest attempted seductions ever put on-screen and is thus worth detailing here (it was cut, alas, from the Clooney version):

A Georgetown party is breaking up at dawn. Walter Matthau's arms expert, who has spent the evening blithely speculating about how many tens of millions of people might die in a nuclear exchange, finds a hot number unexpectedly reclining in the passenger seat of his convertible. As he drives her home, she says to him, her voice all breathy, *Dolce Vita* languor, "We all know we're going to die, but you make a game out of it. A marvelous game that includes the whole world. And you make it seem possible."

Matthau (annoyed): "It is possible. Even probable."

She: "You make death an entertainment. Something that can be played in a living room."

Matthau: "As good a place as any."

She: "No. There's an even better place. Pull in here."

But he doesn't. Instead he stops the car, slaps her ("I'm not your kind," he explains), and we cut, perhaps with relief, to the boys-only world of the Strategic Air Command. Not that everyone would respond to this provocation in the same way; it would be interesting to know whether President Kennedy's frequency of conquest picked up or tapered off during the missile crisis, an aspect of history that *Thirteen Days*—which was partially funded by one of Kenny O'Donnell's sons—declines to touch upon.

The prospect of extinction certainly focuses the libido, if one is at all inclined that way.



CUBAN NOOKIE CRISIS
Steven Culp as R.F.K., Kevin Costner as Kenny O'Donnell, and Bruce Greenwood as an apparently celibate J.F.K. in *Thirteen Days*.

We have now been living with the possibility of all-out nuclear war for close to half a century, but the fact that this has taken Armageddon out of the hands of woolly first-century prophets and given it to people who are ruthless enough to lead nations only fitfully penetrates the public's consciousness. *Fail-Safe*, *Dr. Strangelove*, and *On the Beach* were part of the first great cycle of nuclear-war movies, all released at the height of the Cold War, after both sides had first acquired the means to vaporize whole peoples. A second cycle, including works such as *Testament* (1983) and the TV movies *World War III* (1982) and *The Day After* (1983), cropped up during the early years of the Reagan administration, when NATO was installing new medium-range missiles in Europe, the nuclear-freeze movement was at its height, and the president was indulging in loose apocalyptic talk about "the evil empire." In that environment, *The Day After*—a disaster-movie-style depiction of a nuclear strike on Kansas, with Jason Robards, JoBeth Williams, and Steve Guttenberg starring as just plain folks—was thought to be so disturbing and graphic that the administration dispatched a visibly annoyed Secretary of State George Shultz to a post-broadcast town-hall meeting, where he assured Ted Koppel that the president wasn't secretly keen on flattening Vladivostok. Watching the film now, though, it's hard to see what the fuss was about: genuinely frightening sequences, such as the confused, disbelieving moments before the bombs go off, are more than offset by risible foreshadowing, such as when a young bride-to-be asks her horny fiancé, "Can't you wait just a few more days?" (*Better not, dude!*) The film's later stages also afford the curious pleasure of watching Guttenberg's hair fall out.

Why we are now seeing another renaissance of nuclear films is less immediately obvious, if there *is* a reason aside from the usual cultural wheel-turning that brings back everything—70s wrap dresses, *Charlie's Angels*, a Bush administration, to cite three recent examples. Jonathan Schell, the writer whose 1982 book, *The Fate of the Earth*, introduced the public to the concept of nuclear winter and became the *Silent Spring* of the freeze movement, sees a growing public concern with post–Cold War nuclear issues such as proliferation among countries like India and Pakistan, the threat of nuclear terrorism, the renewed debate in the U.S. over missile defenses, and the fact that no one really knows how much plutonium is lying behind file cabinets in the former Soviet Union. "There are things stirring," Schell says of goings-on among anti-nuclear activists. "They just haven't quite risen above the level of the radar yet." He notes that 50 town meetings in Vermont have recently called for the abolition of nuclear weapons. "That's the way the freeze started," he adds, sounding not particularly hopeful.

The end of the Cold War and the comforts of the 90s economic boom have supposedly provoked a perverse longing in the body politic (or at least among journalists and pundits) for the excitement of the old days, when big, scary Soviets vowed, "We will bury you!," as if they were baiting the rubes at a World Wrestling Federation smackdown. (Of course, our own conflicted thoughts on this subject are nothing compared to the Russians', for whom the Cold War represents a period when they could boast of actually having an economy.) Perhaps the resurgent wave of nuclear culture simply reflects the fact that, wishfully or not, many people have banished the specter of atomic warfare to the distant past—and that people tend to feel at least a small measure of fondness for the past, no matter how terrifying it actually was. For example, this scene from *The Day After*: "It's like 1962 all over again," says the Jason Robards character's wife, played by Georgann Johnson, as the couple lie in bed watching an ominous newscast the night before the missiles fly. Robards and Johnson then begin reminiscing about how they conceived their daughter during the Cuban missile crisis, back when they were happy, barefoot-in-the-park newlyweds living in New York City. It's a cozy, nostalgic moment, though unfortunately short-lived. □

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VANITIES



Shannyn Sossamon **OCCUPATION:** Actor and D.J. **AGE:** 22. **PROVENANCE:** Reno. **MAKES HER DEBUT AS A PRINCESS IN:** *A Knight's Tale* with **Heath Ledger** this summer, and a few months later she stars in *40 Days and 40 Nights* with **Josh Hartnett.** "He tries to see if he can go 40 days without having sex or masturbating. It's not as funny as it sounds. It's actually kind of realistic. You know, guys and their stupid issues." **BUT HER REAL LIFE STORY'S MORE OF A CINDERELLA TALE:** She was discovered while D.J.'ing **Gwyneth Paltrow's** birthday party in Los Angeles. "My friend was hired for the job and wanted to borrow my turntables and was like, 'Can you come so I can take breaks?' I was there for about an hour and left. Then the casting director [of *A Knight's Tale*] called me. I wasn't trying to be an actress at the time, but it was such an amazing opportunity. It did kind of fall into my lap." **RENO? RENO, NEVADA, RIGHT?** "Every time I say 'Reno' I get the funniest reactions. I'm the little white-trash girl. I did work at a casino once, and for about 11 or 12 years my mom was a blackjack dealer." **SO CAN WE COUNT ON YOU TO D.J. OUR ANNUAL OSCAR PARTY?** "No! But I am still D.J.'ing. I know who could D.J., though, and I'd come with him and help." —KRISTA SMITH

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARC BAPTISTE

Common Grounds

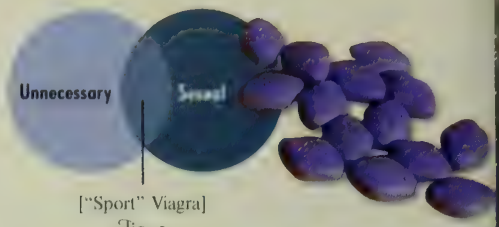
The world as a series of sets and subsets

BY HENRY ALFORD



[Belgium]
Fig. 1





["Sport" Viagra]
Fig. 2



[The Garden State]
Fig. 3

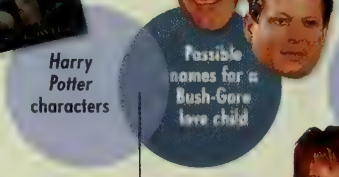


[*Dancer in the Dark*]
Fig. 4





[Olympia Dukakis]
Fig. 5

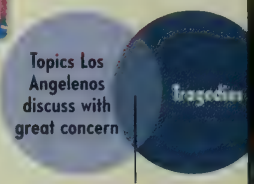


[Dumbledore]
Fig. 6



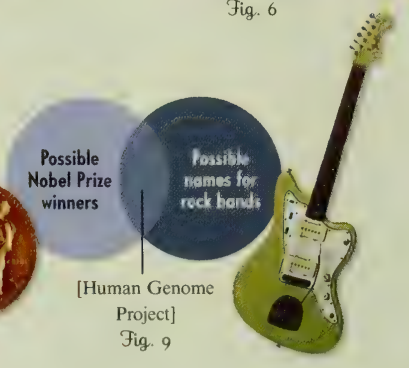


[Children's-book authors]
Fig. 7



[Silicone drift]
Fig. 8

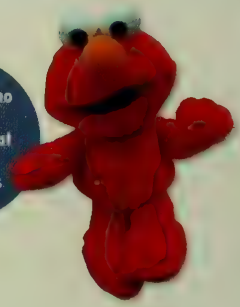




[Human Genome Project]
Fig. 9



[Tickle Me Elmo]
Fig. 10



NIGHT TABLE READING



HELEN FIELDING
author, Cause Celeb *(Viking)*

Cocktail Time,
by P. G. Wodehouse (Penguin).
"I love Wodehouse—I think he's a genius and it's the best possible thing to put you in a genial and jolly state of mind with an amused perspective on life. Also, he's the best plotter ever."



JAMES BARBOUR

The Diary of a Retiring Actor,
by Alec Guinness (Viking).
"A touching and humorous autobiographical look at the life and



STEPHEN MALKMUS
musician

The Easter Parade,
by Richard Yates (Delacorte).
"Great mid-70s book by the critically fêted, commercially damned, and recently departed author of *Revolutionary Road.* I can't get enough of it. Massive self-deception, failure at love, middle-class resentment—it's all there, like Updike if he chain-smoked."

JIM KELLY
managing editor, Time

Miracle at Philadelphia,
by Catherine Drinker Bowen (Atlantic–Little, Brown).
"A crackling narrative of how seven dozen strong-willed men met in the steamy summer of 1787 and aft much arguing managed to produc that astounding document, the U.S. Constitution."



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Mad About That Technocracy!

Nan Darien mixes it up with the cyber-elite

I think I mentioned in my last dispatch to you that I am very concerned about the fashion community's gradual decimation of the python population.

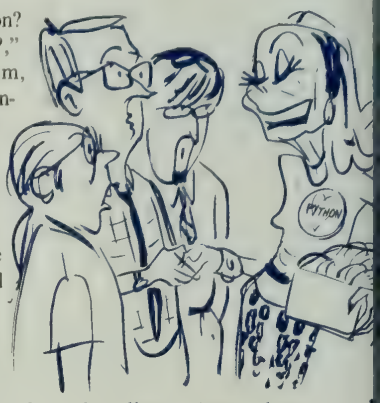
The more I think about this *misérable* of the jungle I keep envisioning a gorgeous, reticulated 30-footer being seized mid-slither, and then **Tom Ford** turning him into a pair of pants the more concerned I grow. Indeed, I have decided that the preservation and rehabilitation of this noble creature is my cause, my mandate, it's—to use the **Brooke Astor** paradigm my New York Public Library.

My first step, I know, is fund-raising. Everyone I talked to said that the cause has a nice "eco" tang to it, so the people most likely to open their checkbooks are the young, who care about animals and the environment and whatnot. In fact, my friend Dede said, "Why not try some of these new cyber-billionaires running about like so many wobbly-legged chicks flecked with just-burst eggshell?" So when I heard that the ultra-exclusive conference for the kingpins of the cyberworld, Agenda, was being held in Scottsdale, the golden bells of opportunity pealed.

I adore Arizona, and think it should flush New Mexico *right* down the toilet; all that turquoise jewelry gives me the pip.

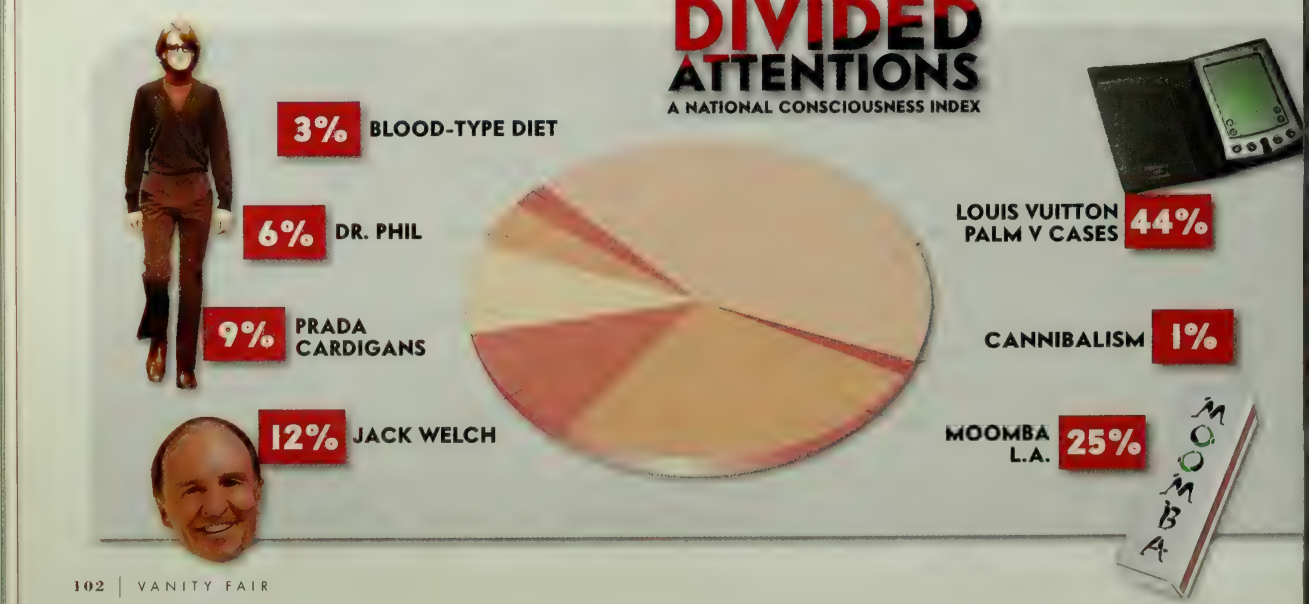


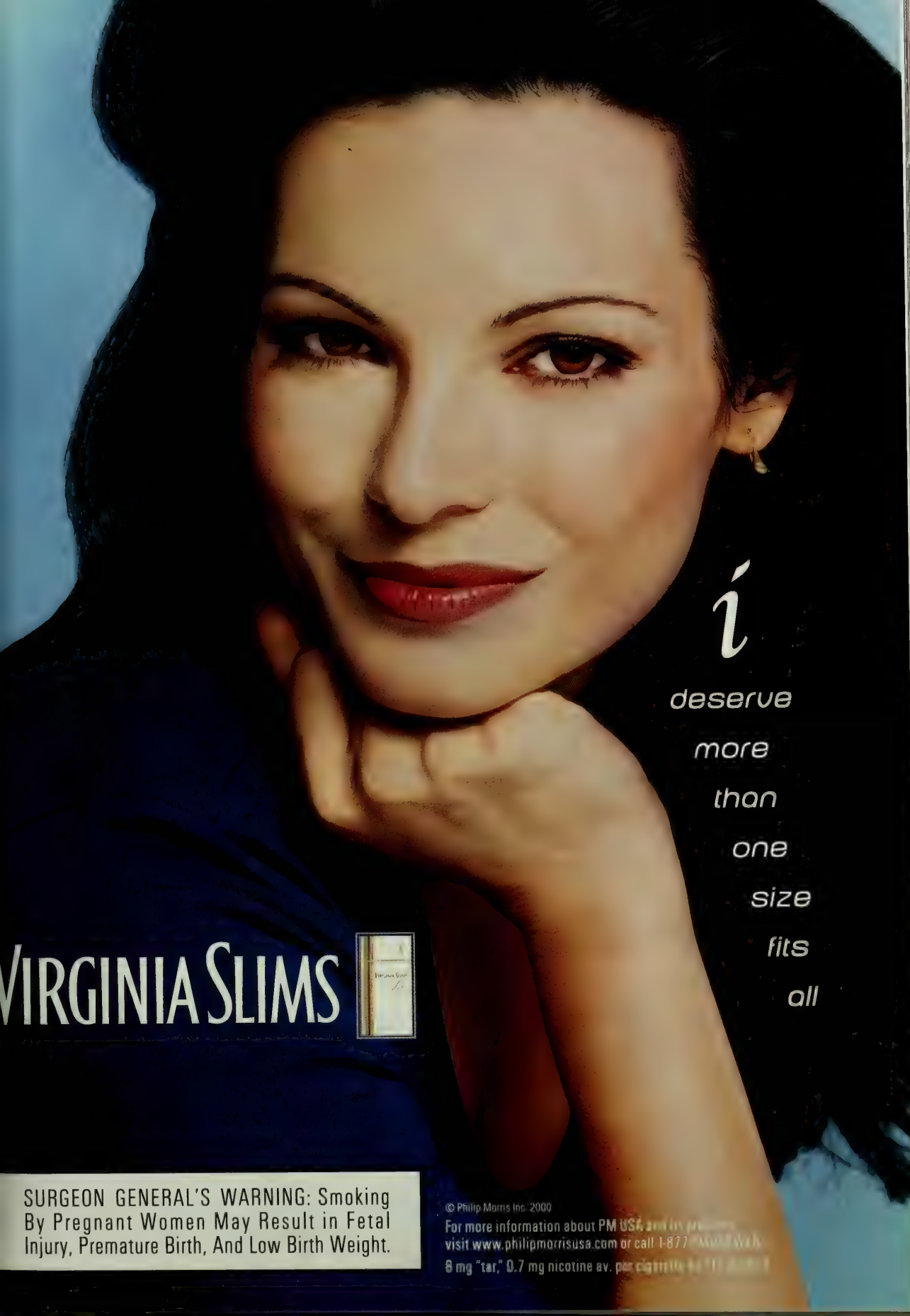
Off I went. Never have I seen so many pasty-faced, sneaker-wearing Caucasian males in their early 40s in my life! I felt like I was at a roast for **Tim Allen.** I tried to have audience with a luminary—an **Esther Dyson** or a **Jerry Yang**—but it was rough sledding. One techie type asked me, "Python? That's your U.R.L.?," whereupon I told him, "No, darling, it's an s-n-a-k-e"; then I baffled the C.E.O. of Oracle when, as we fashionable folk are wont to do, I used the singular of "pants" to describe a recent garment-based atrocity.



My one lucky break came from a writer for *Wired,* whom I was seated next to at the Saturday dinner (game hen: very stringy). I could not understand a single thing that came out of this man's mouth. He said to me, "Hollywired is jacking into a lot of on-line haptic modalities in an effort to reboot into the speech-driven modalities of the cyber-tribe"; grasping at conversational straws, I said, "Well, movie people are a different breed. A different breed." He started talking about "wavelet compression" and "fractal encryption," and then he delivered a whole screed about "cellular middleware on the infobahn"—my dear, I have never met such a charming robot in my life. My head was swimming from his conversation, not to mention the wine (a divine '93 Sauvignon Blanc: absolute *butter*). I was barely keeping my head up. So, finally, hoping to show that I'm "with it," young, hep, a "playah" (that's black talk), I wove together several of the phrases he'd used into a statement that I hoped would sustain his interest. I said, "The fashion world is flaming its own mother ship on the infobahn by using the python as a kind of incandescent spamming." His eyes lit up. He looked fascinated. He said, "There might be a story in this."

La publicité! The struggle commences.




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all
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Intelligence Report

The colleges



	TECH SCHOOLS	IVY LEAGUE	SEVEN SISTERS	BIG TEN	SCHOOLS of the DUMB
FLAGSHIP CAMPUS	Cal Tech	Brown	Smith	Michigan	Bennington
FOSTER CHILD	◀ Jeff Bezos	Duncan Sheik	Hillary ◀ Clinton	George W. Bush	◀ Bret Easton Ellis
FASHION	Orange cargo pants ▶	Armani Exchange	Floral scrunchy	◀ North Face bubble jacket and cargo shorts	Cords, obscure-band T-shirt, nail polish for men ▶
HOT CLASS	Particle Physics 205: Building and Maintaining ◀ Your Hydrogen Bomb	Intro to Ethics: The New Altruism of America's Meritocratic Elite	Advanced Empowerment	Anything offered by the celebrated Ohio State Accounting Department	Sex with Betsy (one of Bennington's most popular classes)
CAR	Make-your-own electric car	Black 2001 Jetta	White 2001 Cabriolet	Saffron Accord	Silver S ◀ 900
BODY ALTERATION	Braces	Nose job	Brazilian wax	Navel ring	Henna face tattoo
ROMANTIC STATUS	Upscale escorts for enfantrepreneurs	In committed on-line ▶ relationship	Four-year plan	Candidate for MRS degree	"People hook up. It definitely happens
CAMPUS LEGEND	Underground LSD labs ▶	Suicide rule	Bordello dorm	Local farmer defends sheep ◀ meadow from frat invasions	◀ F.B.I. ta campus p
HOT PROTEST	◀ Save Napster	No classes during Kwanza	Better lights on footpath	Free-range pork at campus hot-dog stand	Free Mumia
MUSIC	Stereolab	Dave ▶ Matthews	Ani DiFranco ▶	Eminem ▶	Belle and Sebastian
DRINKING GAME	Beer Chess ▶	The Wanker	I Never ...	Asshole Waterfall	Circle of Death
BLAZING RITUAL	P.C. gang hacked by R.A.'s	Icky cookie	Forced midnight pajama ◀ march to ice-cream shop	Four-story beer funnel ▶	Forced to read *Story of O* until you like it
ACCESSORY	Corporate headhunter	Condescending smirk	Rape whistle	Key-chain Breathalyzer	Half-read copy of *Gödel, Escher, Bach*
PICKUP LINE	"Ever tried the top-two percentile?"	◀ "This sundial is named after my grandfather."	"Would you like to see the closet where Sylvia Plath tried to hang herself?" ▶	"Come on, it's for my initiation."	"What's wrong?"
NAKED EVENT	M.I.T. Naked Day-Trading	Princeton Nude Olympics	Vassar HomoHop	Michigan Naked Mile	Hampshire Roman Sc
DRUG	Nitrous	Vivarin	Cosmopolitans	Ritalin-jalapeño poppers ▶	Lithium
ALUMNI BECOME ...	Pacific Bell C.E.O.	*Everybody Loves Raymond* staff writer ▶	No. 2 in Christie's Bid Department	Mutual of Omaha regional rep	Townies
MOTTO	"We're the Junior Paper Billionaires Club."	"The meaning of excellence."	"It's like Ally McBeal goes to college." ▶	"The best five years of my life."	"Color outside the lin

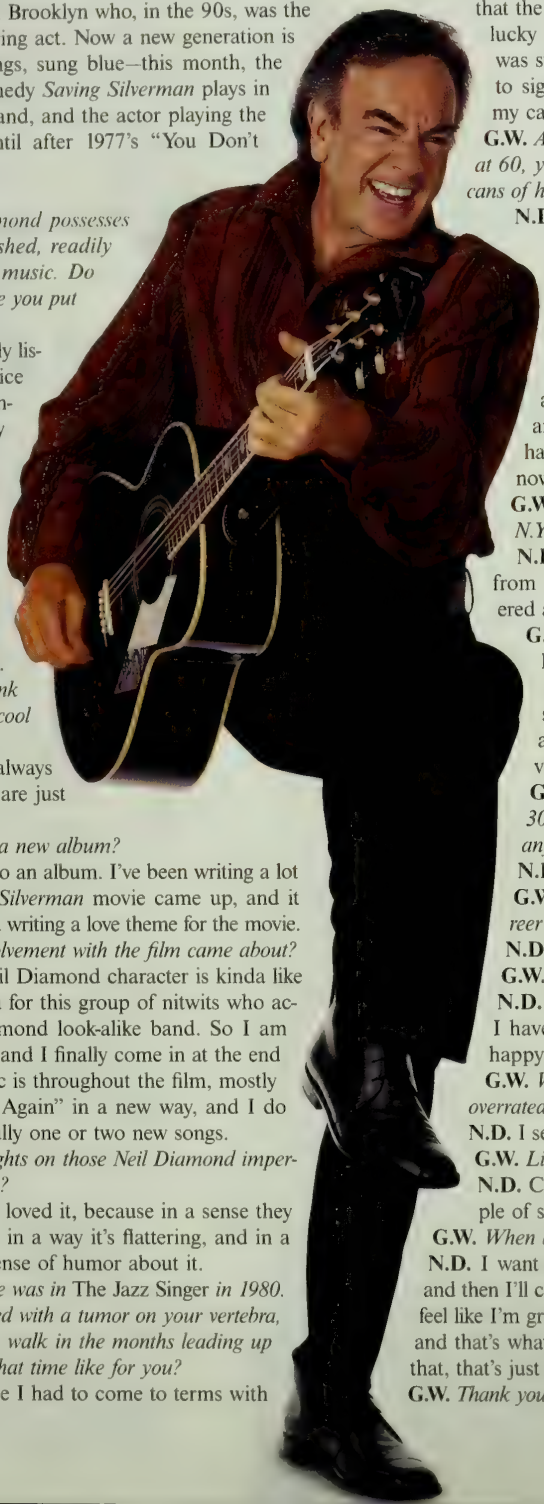
—ADAM LEFF and RICHARD RUSHFIELD

GEORGE WAYNE

Q&A

Neil Diamond: hello again

Since 1966, the sordid thoughts of millions of suburban American ladies have centered on a singer-songwriter from Brooklyn who, in the 90s, was the country's fifth-biggest touring act. Now a new generation is getting hip to the old songs, sung blue—this month, the main character in the comedy *Saving Silverman* plays in a Neil Diamond tribute band, and the actor playing the part wasn't conceived until after 1977's "You Don't Bring Me Flowers."



George Wayne: *Neil Diamond possesses one of the most distinguished, readily identifiable voices in pop music. Do you remember the first time you put that voice to music?*

Neil Diamond: I never really listened too much to my voice until a friend of mine mentioned that she liked my voice, and that was in the early 70s, so I've been aware of it since then. There isn't much I can do to improve it; it is what it is. The voice has stayed the same. And maybe that's one of the reasons it's so recognizable.

G.W. *And why do you think Neil Diamond is suddenly cool again?*

N.D. Well, I think I've always been cool. I think people are just starting to realize it now.

G.W. *Are you working on a new album?*

N.D. I hope it will turn into an album. I've been writing a lot recently, and this *Saving Silverman* movie came up, and it started me writing. I started writing a love theme for the movie.

G.W. *Is that how your involvement with the film came about?*

N.D. No. Actually the Neil Diamond character is kinda like this spiritual musical guru for this group of nitwits who actually have this Neil Diamond look-alike band. So I am part of the whole picture, and I finally come in at the end of the film. And my music is throughout the film, mostly the old hits. I do "Hello Again" in a new way, and I do "Holly Holy," and hopefully one or two new songs.

G.W. *What are your thoughts on those Neil Diamond impersonators and tribute bands?*

N.D. I love it, I've always loved it, because in a sense they keep the music alive, and in a way it's flattering, and in a way you have to have a sense of humor about it.

G.W. *Your first starring role was in* The Jazz Singer *in 1980. In 1979 you were diagnosed with a tumor on your vertebra, and you could hardly even walk in the months leading up to the filming. What was that time like for you?*

N.D. It was scary, because I had to come to terms with what was happening to me, and what would happen to the kids. I wrote my last letters to all of them, and hoped that the surgery would go well, which it did. I was lucky because I recuperated quickly, although I was still using a cane. When I went to England to sign the contract for *The Jazz Singer,* I left my cane at home and just got on with my life.

G.W. *Among your major achievements is that, even at 60, you still have a full head of hair. How many cans of hair spray do you go through in a week?*

N.D. I have a pretty good head of hair, but I don't use hair spray.

G.W. *Another Neil Diamond signature is those sparkly glass-beaded shirts. Who makes them?*

N.D. Bill Whitten, who has designed my stage clothes for the last 30 years. He has a dozen ladies from El Salvador working and making these shirts. They're all done by hand. So I have been supporting 12 families now for the past 30 years just on my shirts.

G.W. *And what was it like being a jock on the N.Y.U. fencing team?*

N.D. Fencers hardly get any attention except from other fencers. You're never really considered a jock if you're a fencer.

G.W. *But you didn't graduate from college.*

N.D. I got my first professional offer from a publisher to be a songwriter, so I left school, and took the leap. In 1995, I got an honorary degree in fine arts, and I was very proud to accept it.

G.W. *You've been on the road for more than 30 years. Are you sure you haven't fathered any illegitimate children?*

N.D. Absolutely.

G.W. *Would you say your devotion to your career ruined your two marriages?*

N.D. It certainly didn't help.

G.W. *Are you married again?*

N.D. No, but I have a significant other whom I have been with for four years. And I'm very happy and smitten with her.

G.W. *Which of your peers do you think is the most overrated?*

N.D. I see a lot of talent out there that's underrated.

G.W. *Like who?*

N.D. Christina Aguilera. Listen to her sing a couple of songs—she is very talented.

G.W. *When are you going back onstage?*

N.D. I want to finish these gems that I'm working on, and then I'll consider going back on the road for a while. I feel like I'm growing and still able to write beautiful things, and that's what keeps me going. If it's platinum on top of that, that's just a beautiful little thing that God throws in.

G.W. *Thank you very much to the legend that is Neil Diamond.*

Back in Black

Frank Black's 60s flashback

As singer-songwriter for the 80s alterna-pop quartet **the Pixies, Frank Black** helped spawn the early-90s grunge revolution, inspired countless imitators, and established himself as an indie-rock icon. (**Kurt Cobain** admitted that **Nirvana's** anthem "Smells Like Teen Spirit" was an attempt to rip off the Pixies.) Not that any of this concerns him. "I don't really think about it unless someone mentions it to me," says Black. "It doesn't really affect me and making records. I just do what I do." It's this workmanlike attitude that could be the reason that the cherubic 35-year-old has avoided the purgatory of VH1's *Where Are They Now?* syndrome, and is producing some of the sharpest music of his career almost a decade after the Pixies' demise.

While his early solo efforts, including 1993's *Frank Black* and 1994's *Teenager of the Year,* continued where he left off with the Pixies, in 1998, Black—by day Los Angeles resident **Charles Thompson**—experienced a rebirth of sorts. After a dispute with the record label that put out 1996's *Cult of Ray,* Black decided to release an album which was originally a demo tape recorded live in the studio. The result, *Frank Black and the Catholics,* brought not only a new name to Black's backing band but an extraordinarily fresh sound which, while retaining a gritty and slightly pissed-off edge, owes more to classic rock and country music than to punk. "I love punk records, but that's become less of an influence," explains Black. "I listen to a lot more music from the 50s, 60s, and even 70s than I used to, and we're better at being rock musicians, so we're confident taking stabs at more of an established vibe."

For *Dog in the Sand,* Black's sixth solo album, which comes out this month, he delves even further into that established vibe, expanding to a seven-piece band with new instrumentation—including banjos, pedal steel guitars, piano, and keyboards—that fully embraces the influences of everyone from **Bob Dylan** to the **Rolling Stones** to 60s legend **Freddy Fender.** And as Black enters the 15th year of his career, it seems he's learning more from his heroes than just songwriting. "There are certain musicians like **Mike Watt** or **Iggy Pop** that we call 'lifers,' and I think that's the boat I'm in. I don't really want to do anything else," says Black. "Bob Dylan, who's a total lifer, referred to himself as not a song man, but a troubadour. That's what I am, like this is my mission. After a while, it becomes slightly religious." —JOHN GILLIES



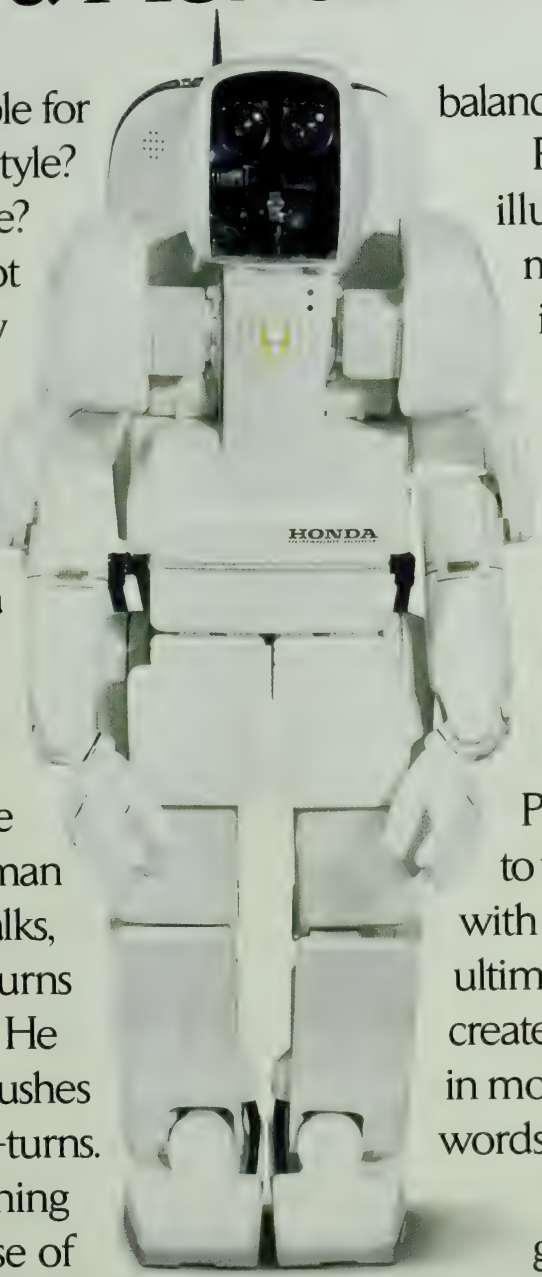
BLACK ROCK Frank Black, photographed in Los Angeles, October 2000.



His great grandfather was a Honda Civic.

Can it be possible for a robot to inherit style? Power? Intelligence? Assuming the robot is the revolutionary new Honda P3, the reply is "yes." After all, Mr. P3 comes from a long line of Honda products which share those traits.

With a design based on extensive knowledge of human movement, P3 walks, climbs stairs and turns corners with ease. He carries loads. He pushes carts. He makes U-turns. All while maintaining a remarkable sense of balance and strength.



P3 is merely one illustration of the many innovative ideas now taking shape at Honda. We're also hard at work on new technology for jet engines. Solar cars. Community-shared vehicles.

Ideas that, like P3, are designed to work in harmony with humans. And, ultimately, will help us create new dimensions in mobility. So, in other words, it seems P3 is just like his great grandpa, after all.

HONDA

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KEANU'S BACK

Keanu Reeves in Los Angeles on November 9, 2000. Reeves claims he hasn't had a serious relationship in five years. "It was just in the last couple of years where I was even open to the idea of [one]," he says.

Keanu, from

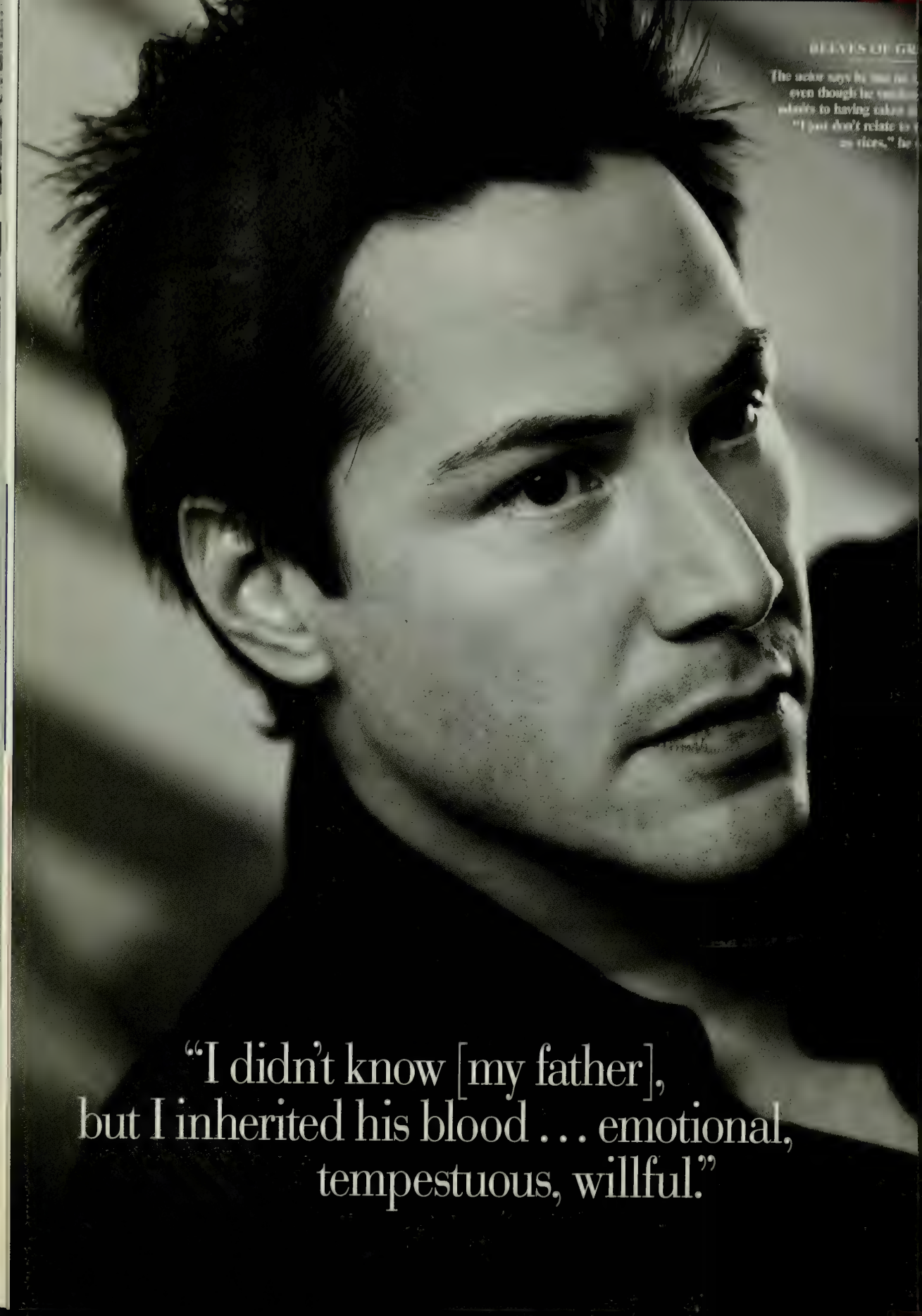
Keanu Reeves provokes truly fanatic devotion and some extreme resentme
action blockbusters, *Speed* and *The Matrix*, Reeves is a Hollywo
Kentucky, with his band, Dogstar. With three new Reeves movies on d
about Keanu-mania (pro and anti), why he's great in some parts a



Both Sides Now

t why? After making 35 movies, including two of the 90s' biggest
del of humble integrity, a low-key dude whose idea of fun is going to Murray,
l two *Matrix* sequels to follow, the 36-year-old star talks to NED ZEMAN
t in others, and how come there's no glamour girlfriend in his life

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARIO TESTINO · STYLED BY BILL MULLEN



"I didn't know [my father], but I inherited his blood . . . emotional, tempestuous, willful."

There are people in the world who are obsessed with the spleen of Keanu Reeves—its diameter, its texture, its *whereabouts.*

There are people—at the University of Washington, specifically—who have received college credit for interpreting the philosophical underpinnings of *The Matrix,* a 1999 action movie starring Keanu Reeves.

There are people who spend hours, days, weeks designing, inhabiting, and governing "Keanuville," a cyber-village dedicated to Keanu Reeves.

And there are at least two Polish women, fresh off the plane from Kraków, who understand that you haven't sucked the marrow out of America until you've seen Vegas, sloppy drunk on Jägermeister and flashing your breasts at Keanu Reeves.

Vegas, city of dreams. It is Saturday, November 25, and a tense nation remains in the grip of white-hot chad madness. But here in this capital of situational ethics, this hotbed of political rest, all is as it should be: Wayne at the Stardust, Lance at the Monte Carlo, those well-preserved Teutonic wizards at the Mirage. Everyone's on the Strip tonight, all the Davids: Brenner, Cassidy, Spade. Every single show: sold out.

Vegas, city of dreamers. Keanu Reeves, iconic Hollywood star and subject of countless unnatural obsessions, is also here tonight, accompanied by his semi-famous alternative-pop band, Dogstar, whose sound its drummer, Robert Mailhouse, aptly described as "power pop/punk/American balladeer." The band has had its ups and downs, but tonight it's playing Vegas. Headlining. Except that the venue is not really *in* Vegas. "Actually," says the band's manager, Doc Williamson, "the show's really sort of on the outer edge of Vegas." Pause. "Actually, it's in Henderson, Nevada."

Henderson is a town where irony goes to die, a 20-minute, $20 cab ride from the Strip, past the Liberace Museum and Wayne Newton's place, a sprawling tract of suburban splendor named Casa de Shenandoah. Henderson is home to one of the less familiar casinos in the area, Sunset Station, which towers above a nondescript commercial strip, near a Sears Auto Center and a Chuck E. Cheese's, and has a kind of Don-Quixote-meets-Mall-of-America theme. At Sunset Station, locals rule. Next month the casino welcomes John Cafferty and the Beaver Brown Band.

Dogstar is scheduled to go on around 9:30, and in the hours beforehand Reeves can be seen at the hotel bar, sipping a cold one and chatting with the locals. He is an approachable sort, unfailingly courteous. So are his amiable bandmates, Mailhouse and singer-guitarist Bret Domrose. One wonders if they could have landed a bigger venue, one which did not include an opening band whose singer plays the tambourine and claps his hands over his head. Dogstar has played the Fillmore, for crying out loud. "No—that's pretty much our range," says Reeves. "Four to eight hundred fans. Plus, there's something kinda funny about playing on the edge of town."

Reeves describes Dogstar's tour as, in essence, a hodgepodge of "little weekend jaunts" planned around his movie schedule. Last weekend it was Chicago and Kentucky. "Well, what happened was, we had a record come out in July. We couldn't really do a *tour,* but we went out for a couple of weeks and then just before training started [for the two upcoming sequels to *The Matrix*], we wanted to play. So this is the only way that we could do it.... We booked these about a month and a half ago. I was in Chicago, working on a film called *Hardball,* and I said, 'Well, I can do weekends.' So it's been that way for the past three weekends. I believe there are six weekends in all." When Reeves is too busy, Mailhouse says, "we have a clone—it's actually Wes Bentley."

Reeves, who works as hard as he plays, has recently finished three films, *Sweet November,* with Charlize Theron, *The Gift,* with Cate Blanchett and Hilary Swank, and *Hardball,* with Diane Lane, and has already begun work on the *Matrix* sequels—a relatively demanding job which will require him to spend the better part of a year on location in Australia. Not that he considers this a hardship—he reportedly makes as much as $15 million per picture. But still.

"I'm getting no rest the past couple of weeks," he says, beaming.

He is asked about the band's last show.

"Murray, Kentucky," he says, nodding proudly. "We played at a university."

There's a university in Murray, Kentucky? Called?

"Murray University."

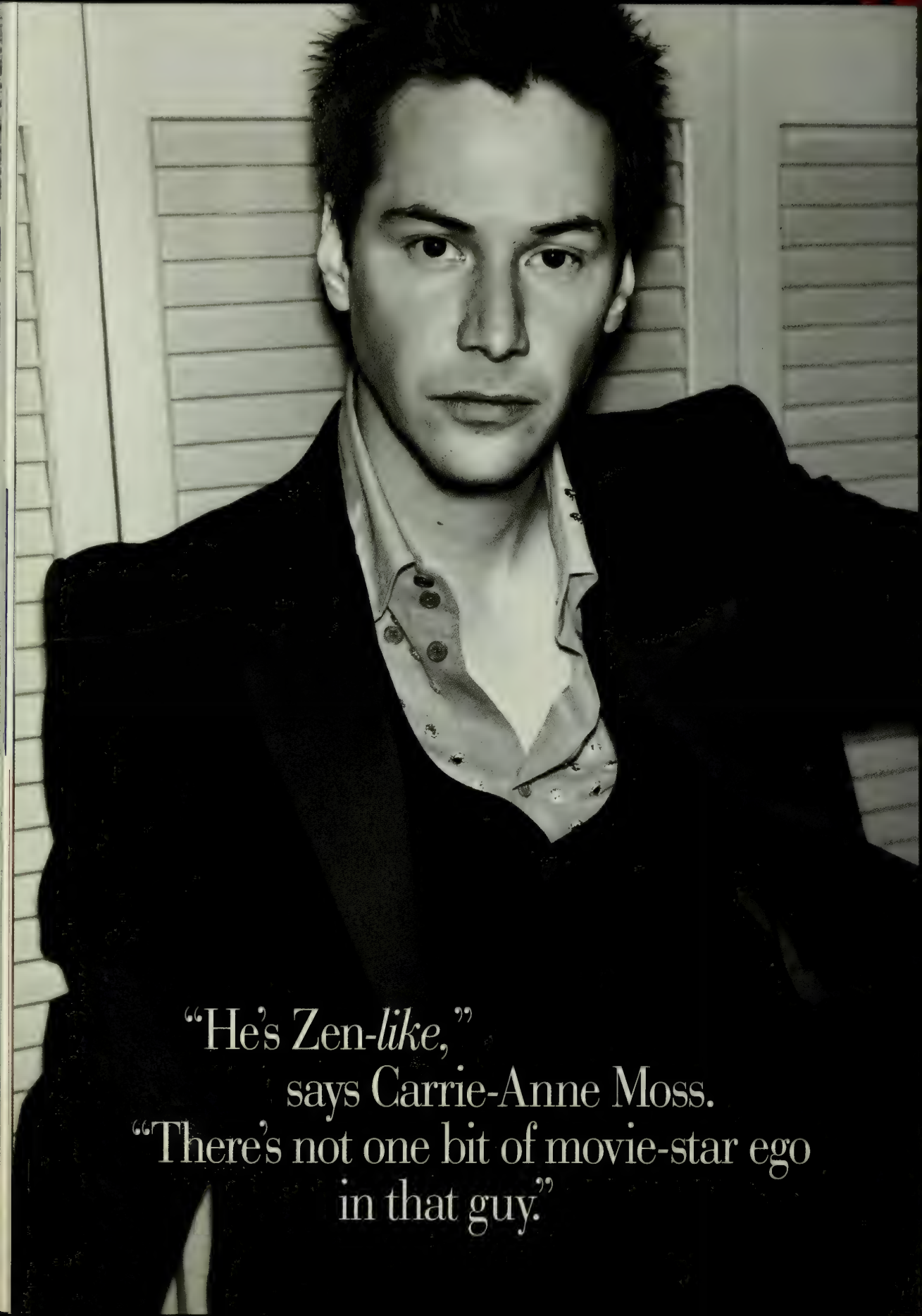
Oh.

"Played the university auditorium theater. I believe they had room for, like, 1,200 people. But we had about 700 come out. It was great. But it's a dry county, so we had to bring in. We had to *import.*"

Desperate times call for desperate measures.

"Yeah. The promoter brought us some beer. But we had to drink it inside. *Behind closed doors.*"

Henderson, Nevada, is no Murray, Kentucky. It's a perfect place for two drunk European tourists to stand near the stage, flashing their big Slavic breasts at Keanu Reeves. The crowd is perhaps 80 percent female. It is usually thus, and the band is used to it. "When Jim Morrison was in the Doors," Mailhouse says philosophically, "fans went to see his leather pants and his big dick. Our guy just happens to be an international film star." During their spirited, hour-long set, the band is pelted with typical Vegas love toys: a brassiere, a lipstick, another brassiere, CONTINUED ON PAGE 158



"He's Zen-*like*,"
says Carrie-Anne Moss.
"There's not one bit of movie-star ego
in that guy."



RINGS ATTACHED

ves's busy filn
edule makes touring
Dogstar challenging.
en he is unavailable,
mer Robert Mailhouse
, the band finds
ther bassist: "We have
one—it's actually
Bentley."

After their father lost one of Cuba's great sugar fortunes to Castro's revolution, Alfy and Pepe Fanjul built a new empire in Florida, importing cheap Jamaican labor to do the brutal, dangerous work of sugarcane harvesting, and wielding ever more political power in Tallahassee and Washington, D.C. In 1989, outraged by what he calls "modern-day slavery," a crusading 37-year-old lawyer named Edward Tuddenham took them to court, spawning four ongoing class-action suits on behalf of 20,000 former workers. MARIE BRENNER investigates an epic legal war that pits the Fanjuls' American Dream against the nightmare of migrant laborers



In the Kingdom



of Big Sugar

A SWEET LIFE

Pepe and Alfy Fanjul, owners of Florida Crystals, *opposite*, relax at Casa de Campo, their 240,000-acre resort in the Dominican Republic. *Above*, Pepe's 30-room mansion in Palm Beach.

The President told her he no longer felt right about their intimate relationship, and had to put a stop to it. . . . At one point during their conversation the President had a call from a sugar grower in Florida whose name, according to Ms. Lewinsky, was something like "Fanuli." In Ms. Lewinsky's recollection, the President may have taken or returned the call just as she was leaving.

The Starr Report

Soon after Edward Tuddenham graduated from Harvard Law School in 1978, he took off for West Texas with two classmates to open a legal-aid office in the town of Hereford, located in an onion-and-cotton-growing area between Lubbock and Amarillo. He called his father, a radiologist in Philadelphia's Main Line, to tell him of his decision. "Hereford?" his father asked, then looked up the town in an atlas. "What a surprise, it's even on the map." Tuddenham was an anomaly in the Panhandle; he wore frayed Brooks Brothers shirts and Birkenstocks, listened to the Rolling Stones and Neil Young, and had no interest in being hired by New York law firms, which were always eager to recruit the best of the best from every Harvard law class.

Tuddenham had graduated magna cum laude, and he had a vision of himself as a fearless advocate for farmworkers. In junior high school, he had once watched David Susskind interviewing legal-aid lawyers and women on welfare, and his mother, seeing his interest, had said, "This is the kind of work you should do—helping people like that." By the time he got to Harvard, he had developed a persistent melancholy which caused him to project an ironic detachment. Women were drawn to his aura of romantic self-regard; in his spare time he played Mozart on the piano and made Mission-style furniture. He grew determined to fight for the Mexicans who swam across the Rio Grande to pick cotton in Hereford.

"I had to believe in what I was doing," Tuddenham tells me to explain his first job. Back then, it was easy for him to believe. The effect of Earl Warren's liberal Supreme Court was still strong, and public-interest law could change social policy; in 1982 the court would rule that the children of Mexican aliens must be allowed to register in schools. Possessed of a serene and mysterious confidence, Tuddenham decided to take on the cotton farmers of West Texas. He allowed nothing to daunt him. He and one of the other lawyers moved into a house in a former World War II prisoner-of-war compound, where their Mexican clients lived in barracks. A local corn grower called them "the Harvard idiots," and a sheriff threatened to run them out of town. The day they got to Hereford, the only movie theater there closed. At night there was nothing to do but stare at the weather. The trio opened a storefront, called it Texas Rural Legal Aid, and set out to teach the Mexicans their rights. The farmers hired an assistant district attorney t their lawyer. One cotton grower held a double-barreled sho up to the face of a U.S. marshal who was serving him paper

The sheriff announced at a local growers' meeting, "T people are outsiders. . . . Texas Rural Legal Aid . . . is suppl these people with information and telling them all about fe laws." Tuddenham's clients, who had been weeding the co fields, wound up losing their jobs or being deported. The co farmers fired them and got local children to spray pestic with water guns. Then the farmers sued Texas Rural Legal charging "conspiracy to extort minimum wage." A local r station played a song composed by a deputy: "I am for jus and the American way / So get out of Hereford, T.R.L.A." ter the experience in the cotton fields, Tuddenham would alv tell his clients, "You can stand up for what is right, but you probably lose your jobs." What happened in Hereford w haunt him forever.

I met Edward Tuddenham in the spring of 1999. I to South Florida because I was interested in a com public-interest case he has been working on for years, representing 20,000 sugarcane harvesters, m of them Jamaicans, who used to work for Flori largest sugar companies, including Florida Crys (whose parent company is Flo-Sun Inc.), U.S. Su and the Sugar Cane Growers Cooperative. The cane cutters suing "Big Sugar" for what they allege to be years of mas wage cheating. In attempting to collect damages of close to million, Tuddenham has had to scrape together loans from Southern Poverty Law Center and beg for grants from legal foundations. He has several local co-counsels, and they are sisted by Florida Legal Services.

In the course of the case, Tuddenham has sparred with sc of the players who were fighting over the presidential elect in Florida this past November and December, includ Joseph Klock, the Miami litigator who argued in court Katherine Harris, Florida's secretary of state. "What I saw TV," Tuddenham says, referring to the hidden agendas and endless wrangles over dimples, dents, and chads, "has e parallels to my own experience over the last 20 years." Tudd ham's journey through the labyrinth of the sugar lobby and Cuban-American zeitgeist in South Florida provided a window into the roiling tensions that placed Palm Beach and Miami-Dade Counties at the epicenter of the recent battle for the White House.

Back in the 80s, Tuddenham's struggle suggested a David-and-Goliath theme: the zealous legal-aid lawyer versus Big Sugar, during a time when



CRUSADERS

Edward Tuddenham and his wife, Sarah Cleveland, photographed at the West Palm Beach courthouse, are part of the legal team that has been fighting the Fanjuls for a decade. *Inset,* a cane cutter in metal shin guards in Belle Glade, Florida, before the work was mechanized.

Tuddenham had to tell his clients, "You can stand up
r what is right, but you will probably lose your jobs."



PHOTOGRAPH BY JUSTINE PARSONS

the courts were becoming ever more conservative. Not long ago, lawyers like Tuddenham were admired for their idealism, but now many people consider them naïve and impractical, arguing lofty principles before juries who want to get home in time for Oprah or *Monday Night Football.* In the less compassionate, more self-interested America of 2001, is the practice of public-interest law becoming an anachronism? Tuddenham's long crusade in South Florida raises an even larger issue: Is public-interest law virtually impotent in the legal and business climate of America today?

The case that drew me to Palm Beach County and Tuddenham, *Bygrave* v. *Okeelanta,* also poses a vexing moral dilemma: At what point does public-interest law stop being a matter of principle and become a battle of egos, a need to win? Twenty years after the battle of the Harvard men versus Hereford, the paradox continues to trouble Edward Tuddenham. "I have a recurring nightmare," he says. "I am on a subway, and I can't get off."

April 1999. From the 11th floor of the West Palm Beach courthouse, you can see the Breakers hotel on the island town of Palm Beach, the red tiles on the roof of the museum that used to be the robber baron Henry Flagler's mansion, the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, and the marina full of bobbing yachts, among them the 95-foot *Crili,* which belongs to Alfonso "Alfy" Fanjul, the head of Florida Crystals, whose subsidiaries, Atlantic, Osceola, and Okeelanta, are corporate defendants in *Bygrave.* For Tuddenham, the psychic difference between the Texas border and West Palm Beach is nonexistent. He believes that both are nether places of political-influence peddling, where Anglo and immigrant cultures collide. From Palm Beach, he can drive 90 minutes and be in the Third World, in the sugarcane-growing town of Belle Glade, with its squalor and its historical lack of regard for the rights Americans take for granted. The Palm Beach sheriff's deputies once used police dogs to break up protesting workers on a Fanjul property.

Bernard Bygrave, a class representative of Tuddenham's case, is one of thousands of Caribbean islanders, mostly Jamaicans, who once worked at Okeelanta for Alfy Fanjul and his brother Jose, known as Pepe. As a result of more than a dozen cases filed by Tuddenham and his colleagues, the cane cutters are no longer Fanjul employees, but they are charging in connected





CUBA LIBRE

Clockwise from above: **Alfonso Fanjul Sr., photograp by his friend Loel Guinness; Pepe and his future wife, Em at El Morocco in New York, 1967; the Fanjuls' former sug headquarters in Havana, which today is a mall; Pepe a Emilia with their black Labs at Casa de Campo, 1998; Nicky DuPont, Alfonso senio Douglas Fairbanks Jr., and J Drexel, 1970; King Leopold of Belgium and his wife visit Alfonso and Lillian Fanjul in Palm Beach, 1967; Lillian ar the Duke of Windsor, 1968.**









The essence of the Fanjuls' lives in exile has been their determination to get back what they lost in Havana.

class-action suits that the Fanjuls' companies engaged in cheating them of their rightful wages in a contract which they argue is "a monumental bait and switch." In May 1992, at the headiest moment in the litigation hell the case has turned into, a Florida judge awarded the workers $51 million in a summary judgment. That moment was fleeting, however, for three years later the decision was reversed on appeal and subsequently broken down into five separate jury trials. Now there are 90 crates of documents in the West Palm Beach courthouse. If nothing else, they provide an encyclopedia of a 50-year American labor scandal. Tuddenham calls the system "modern-day slavery." The Fanjuls' lawyers see the case as "a major loss of income to thousands of decent hardworking men."

Like Henry Flagler, who brought the railroad to Florida and built the town of West Palm Beach for his laborers, the Fanjuls, after fleeing Castro's Cuba, bought out scores of cattle and vegetable and sugar farmers in the Everglades and created nearly 180,000 acres of sugarcane fields, harvested by Jamaicans they imported under the government's H-2 program. Cane was harvested by foreign workers because it was such brutal and dangerous work that no Americans would take it. Hour after hour the men chopped cane with machetes and stacked it in the fields. They wore metal arm and shin guards, and had to stoop over agonizingly to chop through stalks as thick as bamboo. Many were allowed only a 15-minute lunch break, to wolf rice down while standing up. Win or lose, the Bygrave cases have a powerful subtext: they are a morality play about the employment of foreign workers with marginal legal rights.

The Fanjuls are formidable adversaries. They control about 40 percent of Florida's sugar crop, and last year they made contributions to 31 political candidates, giving more than any other sugar power. They deeply resent their nickname: the first family of corporate welfare. Little known to the American public, Pepe and Alfy Fanjul operate within the hidden world of implicit linkage, the grand club of the country's power brokers, who routinely trade favors like baseball cards. "There is a rule to understanding life in South Florida," author and *Miami Herald* columnist Carl Hiaasen tells me. "Alligators don't give to political campaigns, and the Fanjuls do." Last year the Fanjuls and Florida Crystals gave $486,000 to Democratic candidates and $279,000 to Republicans. (Alfy, who co-chaired Clinton's Florida campaign in 1992, is the family's Democrat; Pepe, who was on Bob Dole's finance committee in 1996, is the family's Republican.) "The most telling thing about Alfy

Fanjul is that he can get the president of the United States on the telephone in the middle of a blow job. That tells you all you need to know about their influence," Hiaasen says. At one time, the Fanjuls' father, Alfonso Fanjul Sr., and their grandfather Jose Gomez-Mena presided over one of the largest sugar holdings in Cuba. "One of the reasons why we get involved in American politics is because of what happened to us in Cuba," Alfy Fanjul tells me. "We did not get involved in the Batista government, and we do not want what happened in Cuba to happen to us again."

There is little chance of that. Every few years the Fanjuls and the Florida growers lobby tirelessly for the reauthorization of the sugar program established under the 1981 Farm Bill. Of all the political handouts that campaign money forces through Congress, the sugar program is one of the most controversial. Each year Florida Crystals receives about $65 million in price supports; the Fanjuls' chief rival, U.S. Sugar, takes in $55 million. Although the price of sugar on the world market is 10 cents a pound, American sugar growers by law are guaranteed 21 cents a pound. When the farmers overproduce—as they did last year—and the price of their crop dives, the government takes the surplus at the guaranteed price and holds it in warehouses.

The sugar program adds $1.4 billion to consumers' bills and funnels about $560 million back to the growers, *Harper's* magazine recently reported. Critics of the program believe that it has outlived its purpose and become a Frankenstein monster that is protected by a coalition of interests: congressmen and senators in both sugar and non–sugar states who rely on donations to finance campaigns, corn farmers who sell their high-fructose syrup to candy manufacturers in order to profit from the elevated cost of sugar, and labor unions that fear sugar jobs could go overseas. In the 42 years since the Fanjul brothers left Havana, they have become shrewd practitioners of the quiet ways of American corporate influence. They remain out of sight.

Although the courtroom is full of Fanjul executives and sugar society for the closing arguments of *Bygrave* v. *Okeelanta,* the *Crili* is the only visible sign of the Fanjuls during the entire trial. "People have spent millions of dollars fighting us. Skywriters even attacked us during the Super Bowl! THE FANJULS AND THE $65 MILLION SUGAR SUBSIDY!" says Pepe Fanjul. "We consider ourselves the classic American success story," adds Alfy Fanjul. "We came here and worked very, very hard."

I am late to court the morning of the closing arguments, and as I walk in, Tuddenham is paraphrasing Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes. "A contract isn't about saying what you meant. It is about meaning what you say." He looks as if he slept in his green tweed jacket; his hair is askew. Tuddenham is tall and lean and has the distracted air of a wonk from the Roosevelt years. He is standing in front of easels filled with cane-price charts he had made on the cheap at Kinko's. Invoking the elliptical Holmes for a jury that has sat through three weeks of sugarcane arithmetic provided by economists and industry executives is a sure sign that he is tanking. The courtroom is packed on the defendants' side with Cuban exiles in expensive suits, aging farm managers, chic women in pastel linens and stiletto heels, and a platoon of young lawyers from Steel, Hector & Davis arguing for the Fanjuls. The plaintiffs' side is represented by the entire staff of the Migrant Rural Legal Aid office of Belle Glade, all six of them. Their wardrobe is McGovern-rally casual—short sleeves and knapsacks.

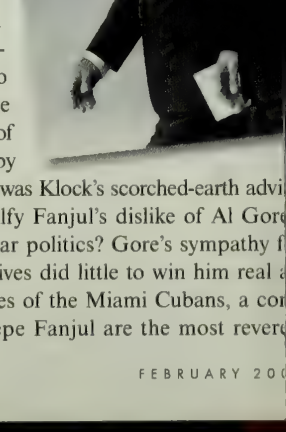
"[This case] had been up and down the court system for 10 years.... Nobody could figure out what to do [with it]," Ju Edward Fine will tell the jury. The litigators on both sides h become like partners in a bad marriage, volatile and furi stripped of the last hint of civility. By not settling years ago, Fanjuls have generated reams of bad publicity about their b ness practices. And Tuddenham, in his epic quest to help migrant clients, may have cost them their jobs.

Seated next to Tuddenham and his principal partner, Da Gorman, at the plaintiffs' table is a Jamaican named Adolp Gordon, who once worked for the Fanjuls as a cutter. He been a crucial witness in the trial. In the last moments of closing argument, Tuddenham turns to Gordon. "Stand Adolphus. Let the jury see you. This case is about you." T denham's eyes fill with tears. Walking out of the courtroom, berates himself for this show of emotion, but it is plain tha Gordon's face he has seen the panorama of the last decade his own life—the files containing the stories of 10,000 men, computer disks spelling out the arcana of migrant-worker l the motions and last-minute appeals, the trips to Jamaica St. Lucia charged on overextended credit cards.

He has always been sure that a jury would see the exploitat of these laborers as he does—a craven mistreatment of peo who have no lobby and no leverage. He believes the trial gone splendidly. "The beauty of this case is that it is so simp It is based on a single piece of paper. It is not a complica case, it is just not an obvious one," Tuddenham says.

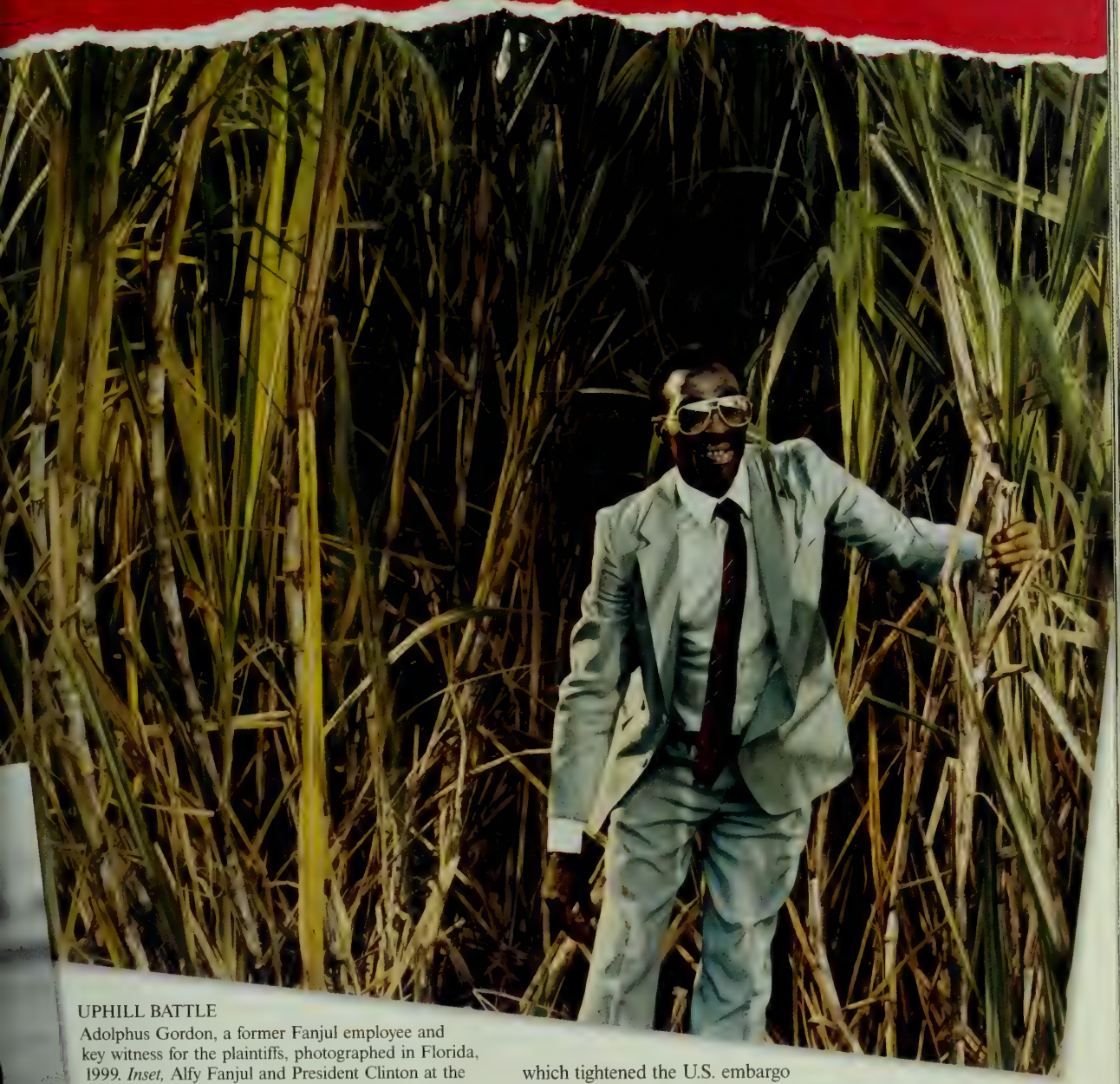
"We were slaves," Gordon tells me softly. "There was limit to the amount of work they had us do."

From the Florida Crystals helicopter it is possibl to see all the way to Lake Okeechobee, the shal low bowl of the Everglades which from the air is a vast sea of saw grass and sugarcane. Getting an interview with the Fanjuls is not easy. For months I have been trying to convince Joseph Klock, Flo-Sun's general counsel and chairman of Steel, Hector & Davis, that it is in his clients' interest to allow me to examine their side of the Bygrave cases. Klock looks like a young Charles Durning, and is not afflicted with self-doubt; partisan invective is his specialty. Klock's firm has represented *The Miami Herald* and Florida Power & Light, and he is the Fanjuls' closest adviser.



At the height of the Florida recount crisis last year, Katherine Harris turned to Klock to represent her. Immediately people who understand the vast power of the Fanjuls and the sugar lobby began to play connect-the-dots: was Klock's scorched-earth advi to Harris tacitly dictated by Alfy Fanjul's dislike of Al Gor conservation policies and sugar politics? Gore's sympathy f Elián González's Miami relatives did little to win him real fection within the power circles of the Miami Cubans, a co munity in which Alfy and Pepe Fanjul are the most rever

ast year the Fanjuls and their company gave $486,000
o Democratic candidates and $279,000 to Republicans.



UPHILL BATTLE
Adolphus Gordon, a former Fanjul employee and key witness for the plaintiffs, photographed in Florida, 1999. *Inset,* Alfy Fanjul and President Clinton at the Palm Beach International Airport, 1992.

members. They were major supporters of the late Jorge Mas Canosa, the ruthless Miami leader of the anti-Castro movement, who made a fortune in telecommunications and construction in Florida. "I ought Jorge Mas Canosa was a fine human being," Alfy says. me people believe the Clinton administration took a tough nce on Cuba in exchange for a donation reportedly close to 5,000 given at a Clinton fund-raiser in Little Havana in 1992. that moment, Clinton's relationship with the Miami Cubans s at its coziest. Later, after the Cubans shot down a Broth-s to the Rescue plane, Clinton signed the Helms-Burton bill, which tightened the U.S. embargo on Cuba and allowed Cuban-Americans to sue foreign companies using or investing in expropriated properties in Cuba.

During last year's presidential campaign, Joe Lieberman went to Florida and visited Mas Canosa's grave, but nothing could calm the anger of the Cubans at the government's decision to take Elián González from his relatives' house in an early-morning raid. The Fanjuls, according to someone who knows them well, helped finance the legal strategy of the boy's Miami relatives, and Pepe, Florida's most prominent Cuban Republican, has told friends that he was outraged by the F.B.I.'s insensitivity in taking the child at gunpoint. "It paralleled their own experience in Cuba," the friend says.

In a front-page story on December 1, CONTINUED ON PAGE 171

THE PERILS OF



MEET THE PARENTS

From left, at a Versace show in Milan, 1997: Michael Hutchence holding his and Paula Yates's daughter, Heavenly Hiraani Tiger Lily; Yates; Peaches, her daughter with Bob Geldof; and a looming Boy George. *Insets: left,* Bob Geldof after Yates's funeral last September in Kent, England; *right,* Yates's body being removed from her London home, where she died alone with Tiger Lily.

PAULA



Armed only with a spirited wit and a bottle of peroxide, Paula Yates won fame as a TV personality, world-class flirt, and wife of Bob Geldof, founder of the rock charity Live Aid. But when Yates left "Saint Bob" for INXS singer Michael Hutchence in 1995, this woman who had lived by the sword of Britain's tabloid press found herself mortally wounded. In the wake of Hutchence's 1997 suicide and Yates's overdose death last year, STEVEN DALY tells how the media culture of "Cruel Britannia" turned on its aging ingenue





THE BRIDE WORE RED

Clockwise from top: the Yates-Geldof wedding party (including David Bowie, George Michael, and Simon Le Bon), 1986; Geldof and Yates outside Buckingham Palace after he was honorarily knighted, 1986; the couple in London in 1995, shortly before their split; Yates pregnant in 1990; a 1982 photo shoot; Geldof and Yates at a 1979 premiere.

She knew it would en badly. When Paula Yates sneaked out of family gathering in London on Christma Day 1993 and sat in a parked car in th rain with her old friend Jo Fairley, bot women acknowledged that nothing goo could come of the situation. Yates, then 3 had spent roughly half her life in a rela tionship with Irish rock figure Bob Geldo then 39, a man whose founding of th famine-relief charities Band Aid and Liv Aid had put him beyond reproach in th eyes of most Britons; indeed, he'd bee knighted for his deeds. But Yates wante out: she felt, as many married people do that she had grown apart from a spous she'd been with since her teens, a spous she now found to be unduly controlling.

It wasn't that simple, however. The wom en recognized that, in Fairley's words, Yate would be "destroyed in the press for havin the nerve to leave Saint Bob." It was agree then that Yates should sit tight and hop the marriage righted itself.

Paula Yates, aging television starlet, au thor, columnist, and world-class flirt, finall left her husband in early 1995, and it is fai to say that the prediction she made with Je Fairley was proved right. It is also fair to sa that, just as she underestimated her own survival capabilities, Yates actually under estimated the bloodlust of modern British media culture, which turned her into a na tional figure of contempt. Yates's relation ship with her new lover, Michael Hutchence a Dionysian rocker from Australia, took on a public significance far beyond its appar ent worth. The invasive nature and breath taking volume of the attention accorded the couple's messy saga in the English press– which labeled her PAULA-ARGH and "Porna" and portrayed her stumbling "from one embarrassing disaster to another"–were ri valed only by the airtime and column inch es lavished on Princess Diana's various travails. Yates's story stands as a paradigm for the nature of celebrity in Britain today where, unlike in America, tabloid values can

So seductive was Yates's pursuit of Bob Geld

simply be tuned out like so much static. or Paula Yates and Michael Hutchence, ever, there was something more than celebrity at stake. The rabid attention e British media pressured their lives to breaking point and beyond. Six years their courtship had begun live on nal television, Paula Yates and Michael chence would both be dead and buried some media-age Romeo and Juliet, he ssible suicide at the age of 37, she the m of a heroin overdose at 41.

"I just thought she was a kind of jumped-up pushy little blonde." Jo Fairley, a journalist, is describing her preconception of Yates before their first meeting, some 20 years ago. The image was understandable, since Yates was then best wn for having cashed in on her status as daughter of a well-known religious-TV by posing naked for *Penthouse* in 1979 he Reform Club, a London gentlemen's oubt, and for subsequently leveraging status as Bob Geldof's girlfriend to ac- e a column in a national pop-music kly. She was also famous, at least in mu- nd media circles, for her highly potent, ost camp seductiveness. It wasn't that necessarily looked the expected part *Penthouse* model or rock-star arm can- she was pretty, though not a stereo- cal stunner—but that she emitted a , giddy vitality which many men found tivating, and which would eventually e her well on television.

Paula Yates and Jo Fairley hit it off in- tly and would remain close friends ughout Yates's life. Like everyone else rviewed for this story, Fairley found es to be, beneath her self-promoting ead-strumpet façade, witty and highly lligent. Says Fairley, "She was the fun- t person I have ever met. She was so k." Friends would also learn that Yates ld avail herself of a certain bourgeois ility when needed, thanks to her rela- ly moneyed, if not quite upper-class dhood. The party girl even had a home- y side. Yates was, says Fairley, both e vixen and the Earth mother."

The pair of "baby journalists" had met ough Bob Geldof, who was then the ny-voiced singer and songwriter for the mtown Rats, a New Wave group that a string of hit records in Britain in the 1970s and early 80s, but whose only success in this country was the 1979 nt "I Don't Like Mondays." Thus, at the time she met Fairley in 1980, Yates enjoyed a certain status as half of a mildly celebrated couple, a B-list punk manqué and his slumming posh girl who would occasionally be name-checked in society gossip columns, but who were never really discussed in the places that mattered.

In the summer of 1983, a London newspaper ran a short, innocuous gossip item, with photo, about Yates bottle-feeding her child in London's fashionable Langan's Brasserie. Had that same event occurred a dozen years later, it would doubtless have occupied the front pages of at least two national papers and been endlessly deconstructed by the proliferating hordes of reputation-seeking photo-bylined columnists who these days masticate pop-culture pseudo-events for broadsheet readers.

Britain has changed a lot since 1983. As a TV host—or "presenter," in British parlance—Yates was herself complicit in bringing about a dramatic shift in the ecosystem of British celebrity. In the 80s, governmental deregulation of television let a brash new breed of independent producer into an industry that had been the exclusive preserve of tweedy patriarchs. There are still only five broadcast stations in Britain (where cable and satellite are also less available than in the U.S.), but the manner in which shows are conceived, commissioned, and executed has become immeasurably more competitive, meaning that novelty and sensation are now the chief currencies of the day. The old BBC credo of "Give the public what they need"—i.e., improving dramas and sober, high-cost documentaries—was rapidly usurped by marketplace forces that screamed, "Give the public what they want"—which effectively meant, as the novelist Will Self puts it, "cheap thrills, faux celebrity and tittle-tattle."

This cultural shift was abetted by a public that was high on the unprecedented consumer choice that was bequeathed—at considerable social cost—by the Thatcher prime-ministry and further encouraged by Tony Blair's New Labour in the 90s. Blair was happy to ride on the coattails of the country's new ascendancy as a pop-culture dynamo, the so-called Cool Britannia epitomized by Britpop bands such as Oasis and Blur; films such as *Trainspotting* and *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels;* and a new, rictus-grin national confidence fed by a booming economy as well as, it should be noted, an unprecedented market for illegal drugs. (The cocaine trade in Britain is estimated to have grown by 750 percent in the last 10 years.)

While British television had become more tabloidized, the tabloids themselves—formerly driven by lurid tales of common folk, political scandal, sports, and royal trivia for working-class blokes—became obsessed with the narratives of youth celebrities such as Oasis's Gallagher brothers, various Spices, and Robbie Williams. Even formerly staid papers such as *The Times* and the *Telegraph* now take any opportunity to display pop stars, soap-opera stars, and youth-TV stars on their front pages, preferably in color.

The cumulative result of these developments has been that the country's pop-cultural lingua franca is now defined by reflexive glibness and unearned irony—much as it is in America. But in Britain the tone is harsher, the treatment of public figures coarser and more gleefully cruel. For any celebrity even an instant past his or her prime, this presents only three viable options: lease yourself out as a human punch line, file a lawsuit, or open an antiques store.

Despite her ample contributions to the country's new youth and media cultures, Paula Yates was herself the product of another time, a time when celebrity was little more than a hobby for a feckless peroxide blonde of semi-bohemian provenance. Yates's cultural reference points were the happy families in the *Saturday Evening Post*s she consumed as a child, effete wits such as Noël Coward and novelist Beverly Nichols, 50s notions of vampy sexuality, and just a hint of punkish *épater le bourgeois.* To the end, she refused to learn how to handle a computer. In other words, Paula Yates was an English eccentric in the classic sense. But it wasn't until the final years of her life that she found that the English press had adopted a new word for eccentric: "loser."

In 1995, Yates received a six-figure advance for *Paula Yates: The Autobiography,* which she dashed off in three weeks. In it, she would illuminate the roots of her often unruly behavior, assaying a "gothic" North Wales childhood in the charge of a cold and distant father and an absent mother. Dad was Jess Yates, the avuncular host of a religious-entertainment show on ITV. Mum was Helene Thornton, a former beauty queen and actress in small British pictures under the stage name Heller Toren; in later life she turned to

at his bandmates called her "the limpet."

writing romance novels. In Paula Yates's bleak yet hilarious and clearly fabulist account of her own formative years, she claimed to have been anorexic at 8 years old and to have dabbled with heroin at 12.

This latter event would have occurred on the Spanish island of Majorca, where Paula's mother took her in the early 70s, after she had split with Jess Yates. (In 1974, he would lose his job in religious TV after newspapers reported that he'd dallied with an actress 31 years his junior.) Majorca afforded Paula what she would call a "beach bunny existence . . . all speedboats and nightclubs and older men." She went back to England in 1977 at 18, and passed the tests required to enter college, though in the end she preferred to record her first gainful employment by landing a public-relations position in television that she kept for just a few weeks.

For all her apparent blitheness about what she called her "Gormenghast" early years (evoking the cult gothic novel was a bit of typical Yates archness) and her Eurotrash adolescence, Yates bore very real scars, which were visible to anyone who knew her well. "She had had such a fantastically unhappy and troubled childhood that I don't think, without major-league psychotherapy from an early age, she would have ever got over it," says Jo Fairley. Having lacked love in her childhood, Yates made her adult life a mission to get it—the high beams of her sexual allure were rarely dimmed, as almost any man who met her will confirm.

Yates had taken up with Geldof in 1977, when she was 17. The other members of the Boomtown Rats called her "the limpet," so sedulous was her pursuit of their lanky, bedraggled, and highly opinionated front man. Band manager Fachtna O'Kelly remembers Yates as a "relatively tough cookie" who bore on her right biceps a large tattoo of the word HELL, in honor of a previous conquest, the New York punk-rocker Richard Hell. (That token would later be covered by a large, unsightly tattoo of a fish.) Although Yates then lived in London's eminently respectable Chelsea district, says O'Kelly, "she had a street sensibility. She could fit in in any circumstance, whether it was with Geldof and his rock 'n' roll surroundings or intellectual surroundings—she was able to adapt."

On an early date, she famously treated Geldof to oral sex in the back of a Daimler limousine. After she visited him in Ireland at Christmas 1977, they began living together, first in the band's communal house in deepest South London, then in their own love nest in Chelsea. Yates would later tell the London *Times*, "I spent a year in bed playing the starlet with shortie nighties, kittens, boxes of chocolate, flowery sheets." Yates's "Mr. Fantastic" eventually suggested she find gainful employment, which she did, in the late 70s, as a pop-gossip columnist for *Record Mirror*, where she wrote about such quintessential period figures as Duran Duran and Spandau Ballet.

Yates's sexed-up persona tended to overshadow the fact that she was an able writer with a pithy turn of phrase, a command of hyperbolic comedy, and a quick eye for self-deprecation (if not, say friends, punctuation). In 1980 she produced the first of her many literary works, a quickie photo book entitled, with banal accuracy, *Rock Stars in Their Underpants*, for which she wrote the text as well as took most of the pictures (of the Pretenders, the Knack, and the like in their skivvies). Andy Warhol called *Rock Stars in Their Underpants* "the greatest work of art in the last decade," but in her introduction Yates recalled how the haphazard commissioning of the book left her with a "polaroid camera hung around my neck like the ancient mariner's duck."

While the Boomtown Rats' last U.K. hit had been in 1980, and Geldof was reduced to being a regular irritant on the BBC's pop panel show *Juke Box Jury*, Yates's star was rising: in 1982 she became a host of the live music-and-interview show *The Tube*, which would become a five-year Friday-night fixture in the cultural life of 80s Britain. An instant ratings hit for Channel 4, the program was an irreverent throwback to the classic mid-60s pop show *Ready, Steady, Go!*, where the hottest bands of the moment would thrash about for a milling teenage throng. And Yates was as closely associated with *The Tube* as the famous host Cathy McGowan—"Queen of the Mods"—had been with *Ready, Steady, Go!* "Paula *was* the show," says series director Geoff Wonfor. "Without her it wouldn't have been *The Tube*." Because there was otherwise a dearth of pop music on U.K. television, *The Tube* was the nation's MTV, served in a single weekly chunk of programming.

On air, Yates, then only 23, came across as a haughty, naughty little pop tart who flitted about in Anthony Price evening gowns and high heels while all around her bands and roadies were sweating away in leathers and Doc Martens. Her most significant duty was to conduct interviews; her chief tactic was the flirtation with which she cannily put her subjects at ease. First t platinum-haired head would tilt onto a b shoulder, the better to affect the up-fro under look that Princess Diana employ in her unpolished early days. Questio would be articulated in a genteel voice t evinced every ounce of her private educ tion. The alternative approach was verb assault. Geoff Wonfor remembers catchi his breath when Yates breezily told t reclusive George Harrison to "fuck off" ter he complimented her on her looks, b the former Beatle, says Wonfor, "just pick her right up off her feet and swung h around." When she called Elton John "fucking tosser" for his extravagant taste jewelry, he gleefuly responded in kind.

Bob Geldof's childhood Dublin was, according to h somewhat self-aggrandizi 1986 autobiography, *That It?*, almost as goth as Yates's: he lost his mot er at an early age; his fath a traveling salesman, was cold and dista and beat him regularly. Nevertheless, an e was born: "He has self-belief to an extren extent that I have rarely come across an where in my life," says a former friend wh knew Geldof in his pre–rock band day "He took a little talent and made it go very long way." The Boomtown Rats wer says another former associate, "almost like project" for Geldof, rather than a true pa sion—a "vehicle that would get the name He had no affinity for punk rock, says th associate, yet he managed to doggedly an successfully sell it to a mainstream audienc

For a time, anyway. Though hitless sinc 1980, the band soldiered on until the mi 80s; Geldof's subsequent solo career wa met with public and critical apathy. But h lasting celebrity had been ensured in 198 when he organized, against seemingly im possible odds, the era-defining charit events Band Aid and Live Aid. In his aut biography, Geldof describes how polit cians and functionaries succumbed to h high-decibel importuning. The project which eventually involved just about ever modern rock star of weight—including suc unlikely musical bedfellows as Phil Collin and Boy George, Madonna and Crosb Stills, and Nash, Bob Dylan and Ro Wood—raised more than $100 million fo famine relief in Ethiopia. (The main veh cles were the pulpit-thumping single "D They Know It's Christmas?" and a spec tacular global television event, seen by a

Yates told friends that Princess Diana thank

nated 1.5 billion viewers in 152 coun-
) Geldof's efforts also earned him an in-
itial position in the rock world that his
c would never merit. "Saint Bob" was
ed as "Sir Bob" when the Queen award-
im an honorary knighthood in 1986, the
: year he married Yates in Las Vegas. (A
: formal ceremony followed in England.)
hough Geldof failed to resurrect his
er as a performer, one former friend in
nd says that he was so financially com-
ble that he paid cash for his country
se, a 12th-century priory in Davington,
t, south of London, now worth over
nillion. Friends say that he had been
ful with his music royalties and that his
ctance to part with money is legendary.
s the former friend, "He was always
first out of the taxi and the last into
bar." Another person familiar with
dof's business dealings calls him "a
ney-mad cunt." (Geldof declined to be
rviewed for this article.)

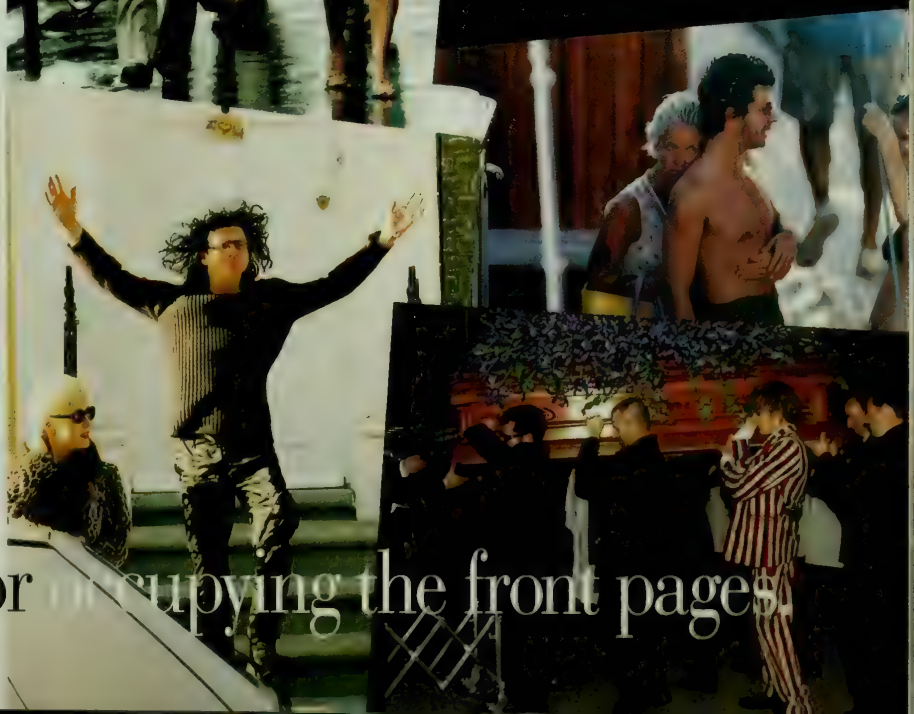
With the cachet of Band Aid under his belt, Geldof was able to further leverage whatever talent he may have had. By the late 80s he had
ome a partner in Planet Pictures, a tele-
on production company owned by veter-
Irish producer Tony Boland, an old
nd of Geldof's who had consulted on
Live Aid project. It was here that Gel-
first evinced a ruthless talent for busi-
and corporate politics. In 1991, Planet
ures would merge with 24 Hour Pro-
tions, a two-man London company that
duced *The Word*, a live weekly magazine
w that ran on Channel 4 and represent-
one of the first and most influential
riages of youth culture and tabloid sen-
onalism. When disagreements arose
ong the four partners of the new compa-
now called Planet 24, Geldof solved
n quickly and conveniently by siding
n his two new partners and ousting
and, his friend and mentor, in a board-
m putsch, according to a source close to
deal—a drastic and telling act that never
de the papers. (Geldof would make
ghly £5 million when Planet 24 was sold
999, though during his 1996 divorce
n Yates, says a friend of hers, he "said
Planet 24 shares were worth nothing.")
Remarkably enough, Geldof, unlike his
ner wife, has CONTINUED ON PAGE 161



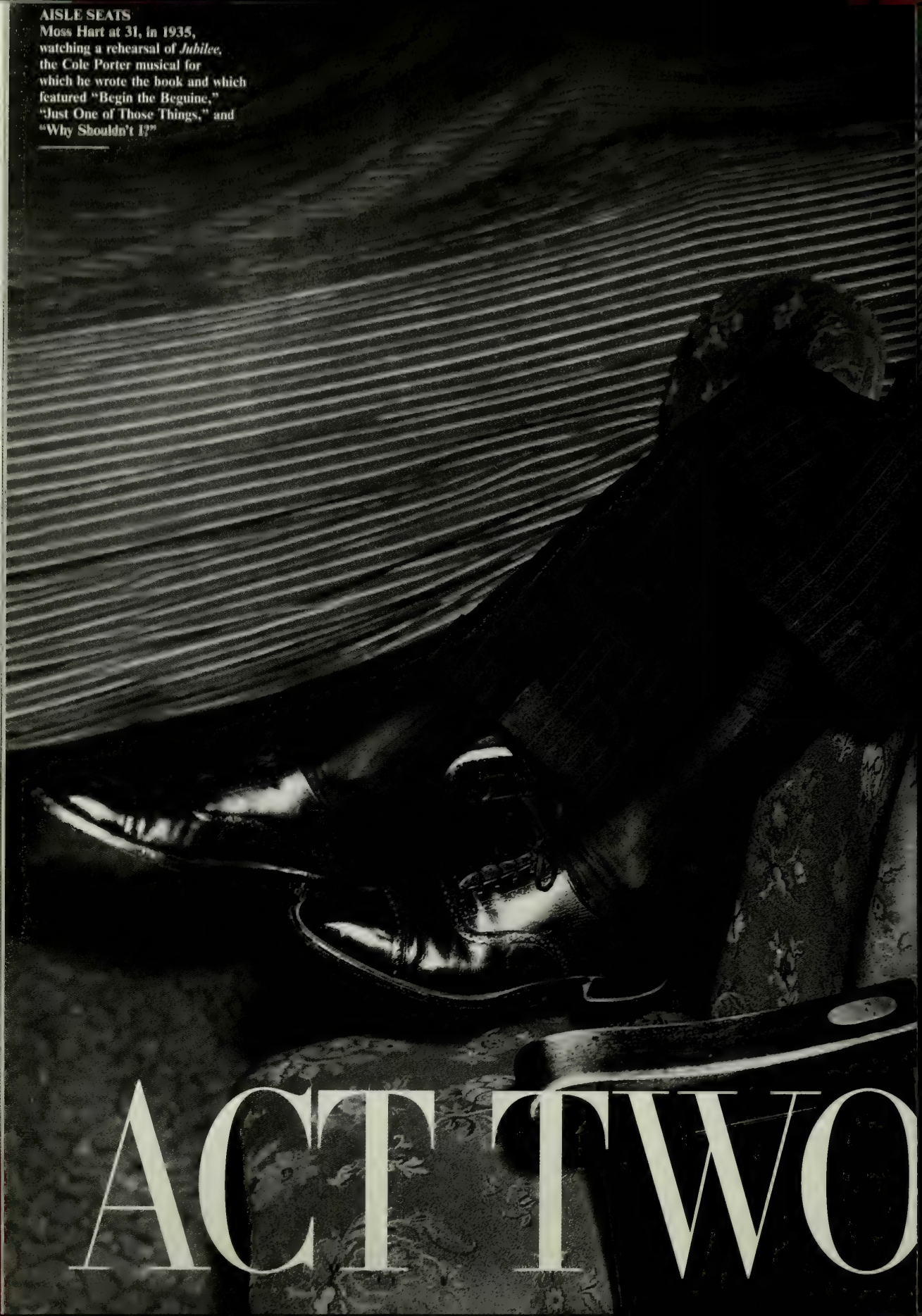


IF THERE'S A ROCK 'N' ROLL LIMBO . . .

Clockwise from top: **Tiger Lily, Yates, and her friend Belinda Brewin arriving at Michael Hutchence's funeral service in Sydney, 1997; Hutchence enjoying the view from his London home (year unknown); Yates and Hutchence in Saint-Tropez, 1995; pallbearers at Hutchence's funeral (the red stripes are worn by the singer's brother Rhett); Yates and Hutchence leaving their London home, 1996; shopping in London, 1996.**



personally for occupying the front pages



AISLE SEATS
Moss Hart at 31, in 1935, watching a rehearsal of *Jubilee*, the Cole Porter musical for which he wrote the book and which featured "Begin the Beguine," "Just One of Those Things," and "Why Shouldn't I?"

ACT TWO



Moss Hart stands as one of American theater's greatest geniuses,
th for his playwriting collaborations with George S. Kaufman and for his successes
as a director. In an excerpt from his new biography, STEVEN BACH charts
o of Hart's most complicated and unpredictable relationships: his friendship with
critic Alexander Woollcott, the "fabulous monster" he parodied in
he Man Who Came to Dinner, and his 1946 marriage to Kitty Carlisle, who helped
him turn Julie Andrews into Eliza Doolittle and the faltering production of
Lerner and Loewe's *My Fair Lady* into a record-breaking hit

In *Act One,* possibly the best and most revered of all theatrical memoirs, the playwright and director Moss Hart spun the Cinderella tale of his life from tenement poverty and a bare seventh-grade education to his meeting in 1930 with the man who would become his long-time collaborator, George S. Kaufman. *Act One* ended with Hart just 25, basking in the Broadway success of their first joint effort, *Once in a Lifetime,* but they went on to write seven more plays together that made Hart rich, famous, and a social dazzler, including *Merrily We Roll Along* and *You Can't Take It with You,* winner of the Pulitzer Prize in 1937. On his own Hart wrote musicals with Irving Berlin and Cole Porter, then reunited with Kaufman to write their seventh play, one of their most enduring comedies, whose characters were dead ringers for some of their most glittering and celebrated friends, none more wickedly or deliciously drawn than Alexander Woollcott.

Woollcott was the first big-time media celebrity. As a man-of-letters-and-more, he was all but inescapable on newsprint, in hardcover, at the lectern, on the airwaves, and occasionally on celluloid or before the footlights.

Woollcott's descent from ubiquity then to obscurity now may be its own comment on the shelf life of modern fame, but in his day he helped define high noon. He inspired portraits by novelists such as Charles Brackett, who lampooned him as Thaddeus Hulbert in *Entirely Surrounded,* and by filmmakers such as Otto Preminger and Joseph L. Mankiewicz, who put him on-screen as, respectively, the lethal Waldo P. Lydecker in *Laura* and the merely treacherous Addison DeWitt in *All About Eve.*

He inspired rancor and ridicule and what a baffled James Thurber called a "Woollcott cult." Kaufman, challenged to define him in a single word, finally found one: "improbable."

Insufferable, others called him. Harold Ross of *The New Yorker,* who for a time shared a house with Woollcott, asked Thurber, "Have you ever been to one of his *famous* Sunday morning breakfasts? ... He sits there like a fat duchess, holding out her dirty rings to be kissed." Edna Ferber declined to kiss the rings even when they were posthumous. When his biographer approached her for an interview, she showed him the door with "I want no part of Woollcott, dead or alive."

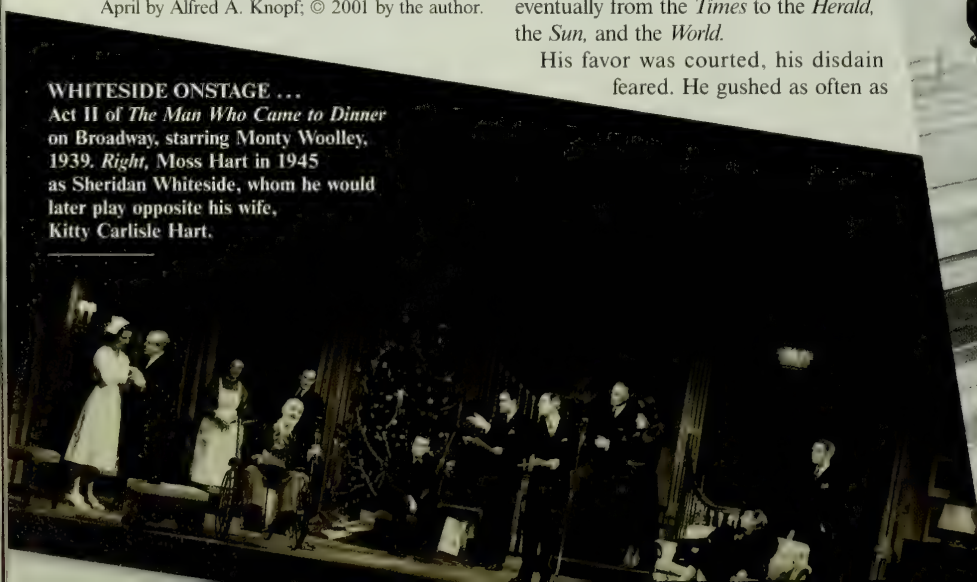
Woollcott first came to widespread attention as drama critic for *The New York Times,* where colleagues referred to him as "God's big brother," a designation he did not contest. He won a famous battle with the Shuberts, who tried to bar him from all the Broadway shows they produced, and elevated the once lowly station of the drama critic in America. He wore the reputation for integrity this gave him like the cape he donned for opening nights, with the flourish of a grandee. His passion for the theater carried him eventually from the *Times* to the *Herald,* the *Sun,* and the *World.*

His favor was courted, his disdain feared. He gushed as often as he skewered. He delighted in being co trary and unpredictable. An early defen er of Eugene O'Neill against the comme cial contraptions dominating Broadwa he could nevertheless rhapsodize over t banal comedy *Abie's Irish Rose* and air dismiss *Anna Christie* as "rubbish."

He was a caricaturist dream: Broadway's ov on-the-aisle. His reser blance to the fattest ar wisest of birds was u canny, and his Coke-bott spectacles and unkem mustache somehow augmented the r semblance. He charged furiously about public—jowls and midsection wobbling in an opera hat and carrying a walkin stick, with "cape flowing and sparks fl ing," as one observer noted. At home Vermont or in the Manhattan apartme that Dorothy Parker dubbed "Wit's End he held court—Ethel Barrymore to Harp Marx, Walter Lippmann to Walt Disney in pajama bottoms and a coffee-staine bathrobe strewn with cigarette ash.

Woollcott was a perennial bachelor unknown sexual persuasion. He had su fered mumps as a young man and was pr sumed to be asexual as a result, though n one was sure. He confounded those wh had scorned him as "Louisa May Wool cott" by braving perils in the First Worl War, from which his poor eyesight migh easily have exempted him. He served in medical unit in France with





WHITESIDE ONSTAGE ...
Act II of *The Man Who Came to Dinner* on Broadway, starring Monty Woolley, 1939. *Right,* Moss Hart in 1945 as Sheridan Whiteside, whom he would later play opposite his wife, Kitty Carlisle Hart.

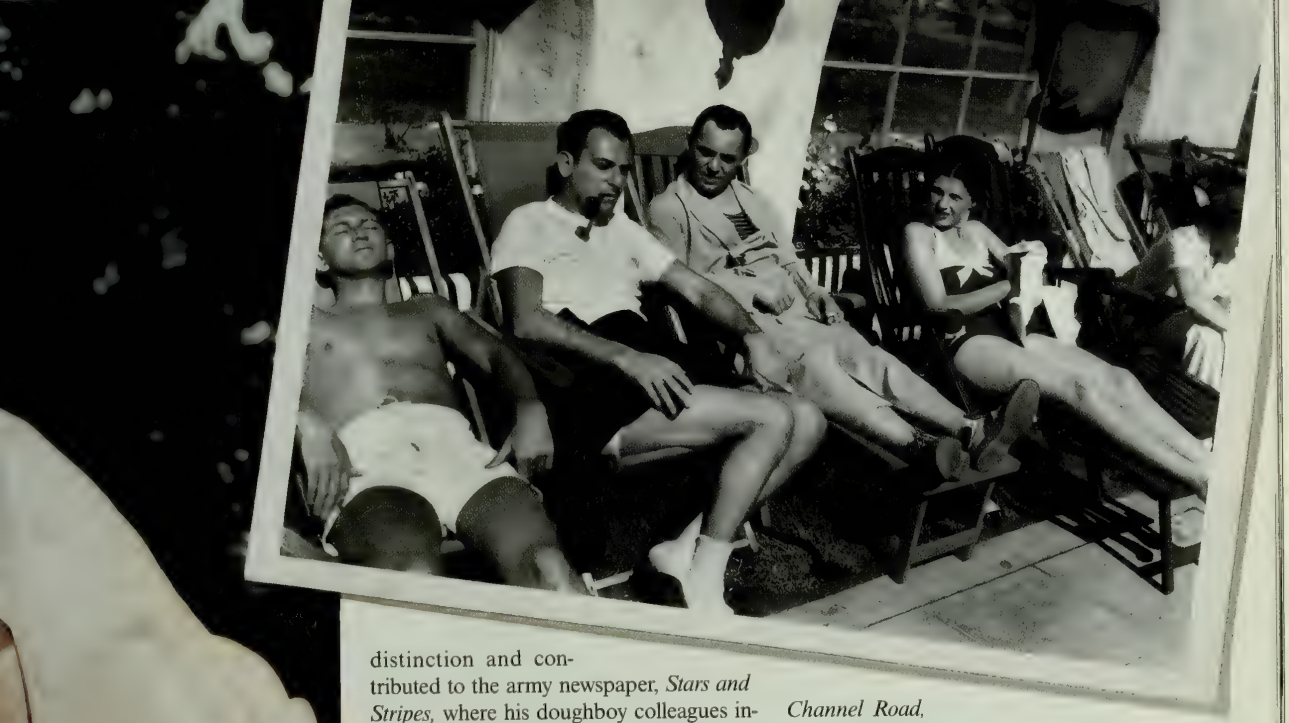
Excerpted from *Dazzler: The Life and Times of Moss Hart,* by Steven Bach, to be published in April by Alfred A. Knopf; © 2001 by the author.

Moss said Woollcott treated him and Kaufman "in the manner of the Dowager Empress of China receiving a couple of coolies."



. . . AND OFFSTAGE
The three faces of Sheridan Whiteside: Monty Woolley, making up to play him in 1939; the owlish Alexander Woollcott, who inspired the character; and Moss Hart, who, with George S. Kaufman, put words in his mouth.


"I had wanted to marry him for so long, and I thought he was a genius, and I was perfectly happy to live his life," Kitty said.



FAMILY MAN
Moss Hart and his wife, [illegible], who today is New York's cultural doyenne, with their children, Kathy and Christopher, in the mid-50s. *Inset,* Hart with composer Richard Rodgers, center, in Palm Springs, 1933. They were writing material for Hollywood musicals.

distinction and contributed to the army newspaper, *Stars and Stripes,* where his doughboy colleagues included Heywood Broun and Harold Ross.

After the war, Broun and Ross joined him—and Kaufman and others—at the Algonquin Round Table, which he more or less invented with humor columnist Franklin P. Adams. With Woollcott, "the vicious circle" earned its reputation. Without him, it might never have existed.

When Ross founded *The New Yorker* in 1925, Woollcott was on the staff, though he was still reviewing theater and acting as an adviser to *Vanity Fair* as well. He contributed profiles to *The New Yorker* and an opinion-and-trivia column titled "Shouts and Murmurs," a heading the magazine retains to the present day. He wrote weightier pieces for *The Atlantic Monthly* and lighter ones for *Good Housekeeping, Cosmopolitan,* and *The Reader's Digest.* He was a gleeful connoisseur of murder and the macabre on the one hand; on the other he was a tireless promoter of the then new use of Seeing Eye dogs.

Radio made him a household name. The great networks had just formed in 1926, and by 1929, Woollcott was before the microphone—"This is Woollcott speaking"—inventing book chat. On the Mutual network he was the "Early Bookworm," creating overnight best-sellers such as James Hilton's *Lost Horizon* merely on his say-so. It would take 60 years and Oprah Winfrey for this phenomenon to recur. On CBS he was the "Town Crier," recycling old anecdotes and tales of murder, sharing what he called his "incurable triviality" with millions of listeners on behalf of Cream of Wheat.

He was even on Broadway. He collaborated on two plays with Kaufman, *The Channel Road,* an adaptation of a story by Maupassant, in 1929 (immediately before *Once in a Lifetime*), and *The Dark Tower,* a melodrama, in 1933 (just before *Merrily We Roll Along*). Both were flops that Brooks Atkinson called "amiable but amateurish." Failure as a playwright, however, was a mere hiccup. Woollcott had played Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the age of four and had been mulling a comeback ever since.

His opportunity arose unexpectedly in a summer house in the Hudson River Valley that he and Beatrice Kaufman, George's wife, shared with playwright S. N. Behrman. Behrman was much admired for his glittering comedies *Biography* and *The Second Man,* and, in the summer of 1931, was completing another within earshot of Woollcott's chatter, which spilled onto the page. The play was called *Brief Moment* and contained a character who "somewhat resembles Alexander Woollcott, who conceivably might play him," Behrman wrote.

Woollcott did play him, lolling on a sofa for three acts and firing off wisecracks like poison darts. The play was weak, but one critic reported that the corpulent star "runs away with the evening's honors." *Brief Moment* continued on Broadway for 129 performances, and Woollcott went on the road with it, adding to his renown. No one thought he could play anyone but himself, but nightly applause convinced him he was destined for thespian laurels. Between radio

broadcasts and lecture tours, he waited for the offers to roll in.

Behrman, in the meantime, returned from Hollywood, where he had been writing screenplays for Greta Garbo at MGM. Under his arm was *Wine of Choice*, another play with a part for Woollcott. As fate would have it, the play tried out at the end of 1937 in Philadelphia, a short drive from Bucks County, where George and Bea Kaufman had a house, and where, just down the road, Moss Hart had recently bought another.

Woollcott's visits to the country were rare, for he preferred his retreat on Neshobe Island in Vermont, where he could set the rules and call the tunes. As 1937 drew to a close, however, he took a recess from Philadelphia and *Wine of Choice* to spend New Year's Eve in Bucks County with the Kaufmans at Barley Sheaf Farm. He left them on New Year's Sunday to stay overnight at nearby Fairview Farm with Moss on his way back to Philadelphia.

He was in high prima-donna mode, petulant and demanding. He spent most of the holiday weekend vilifying Behrman and his play, and was especially annoyed to find he was not the only guest at Fairview Farm, for Moss had also invited Max Gordon, who had produced his play *The Great Waltz*. Gordon's table manners were so distasteful to Woollcott that he fled to the Kaufmans for dinner before returning to spend the night. By the time he did, Gordon had departed for New York, but Woollcott's high dudgeon refused to subside. He demanded Moss's bedroom, as well as a milk shake and a freshly made chocolate cake to be served bedside by Moss's butler, the grand Charles, whom Woollcott denounced as insolent and dishonest even as he was being tucked in.

Before nodding off, he wrote in a guest book Moss kept, in which guests vied at writing the wittiest testimonials to the hospitality of their host: "I wish to say that on my first visit to Moss Hart's house I had one of the most unpleasant evenings I can ever recall having spent."

The next morning he insisted Moss make up for the hardships he had suffered by chauffeuring him back to Philadelphia. Moss later said, "I would have gone to Alaska to get him out of the house," but once behind the wheel he agreed to view Woollcott's Philadelphia performance and discuss it over supper.

Moss offered polite praise for the acting, which precipitated Woollcott's brandy-laced complaints that he had been forced to rewrite his part "from beginning to end" because Behrman's "dialogue simply cannot be spoken." Finally, Woollcott came to the real point, the one he had journeyed all the way to Bucks County to deliver in the first place.

What he really wanted, he announced, was to be the star of a play Kaufman and Hart would write especially for him. He "yearned," he said, "to tour the country in the central part, so that if I could succeed in being funny it wouldn't disturb the other actors."

Moss nodded that it sounded like a good idea and returned to Bucks County, where he and Kaufman were still working on their chronicle play about the theater, *The Fabulous Invalid*. Kaufman had collaborated with Woollcott already, and knew the perils of yielding to his preposterous vanity. No "fabulous monster," as Woollcott cheerily called himself, was marvelous enough to justify the tsuris.

Moss later said he and Kaufman were struck at once by the appalling notion of what might have happened had Woollcott become indisposed and a more or less permanent houseguest in Bucks County. Thus was born, he said, *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, but the idea had other sources as well and was a long time in coming.

Moss's relationship with Woollcott had never been easy. He correctly felt that Woollcott, with his erudition and education (always a sensitive subject for Moss), treated him with condescension, but he treated everybody that way. Moss's easy charm and good looks nettled Woollcott, who called him "Repulsive" while everybody else called him "Mossy." Then there were the flops Woollcott had written with Kaufman, each annoyingly followed by a Kaufman hit written with Moss. Though both Woollcott and Moss were sexually ambiguous, they competed for the platonic affections of Beatrice Kaufman, adding to the petty jealousies that thickened the atmosphere. It is hardly surprising that Moss was relieved that he and Kaufman had their hands full with writing *The Fabulous Invalid* and producing *Sing Out the News!* when Woollcott announced his brainstorm.

Time passed. *The American Way*, Kaufman and Hart's earnestly dramatic pageant about democracy, came round. It was their difficulties with that play that took them to Woollcott's island nine months later. Woollcott was in residence and incensed they had come to Vermont to write something for Fredric March and not for him. It was Woollcott's nagging about "his" play [illegible] the manner of the Dowager Empress [illegible] China receiving ... a couple of coolie[illegible] Moss remembered—that finally drove M[illegible] from the island.

When he returned, there was no av[illegible] ing Woollcott's diva-like ire. The playwrig[illegible] agreed to concoct a vehicle for him o[illegible] they were free of other commitments.

Though their star had charged th[illegible] with writing a role "as different from me[illegible] possible," they knew Woollcott could p[illegible] no one but Woollcott. Making a virtue[illegible] his limitations, they launched into a f[illegible] blown portrait of him. He was exactly [illegible] kind of celebrity Moss had been honing [illegible] talents for parody on for years, and [illegible] threw himself at the target with relish.

The portrait would be Woollcott w[illegible] warts, wattles, and wicked one-liners. La[illegible] when a plagiarism suit arose, Moss wo[illegible] claim they only wrote "Woollcott as t[illegible] public knew him," an assertion that quash[illegible] the lawsuit but was absurd. Woollcott-as-t[illegible] public-didn't-know-him was the whole d[illegible] cious point.

They began a draft they titl[illegible] *Prince Charming* with a m[illegible] strously egocentric radio s[illegible] and lecturer they nam[illegible] Sheridan Whiteside. Reca[illegible] ing the notion of an ind[illegible] posed Woollcott as a p[illegible] manent Bucks County houseguest, th[illegible] sent Whiteside to a small town in Ohio [illegible] give a lecture and go to dinner at t[illegible] home of perfectly ordinary locals wh[illegible] happen to have an icy front porch. Whi[illegible] side would slip on the ice and be confin[illegible] in their home to recuperate from his fra[illegible] tures. At the end of the play, after tur[illegible] ing his hosts' world to pandemonium, t[illegible] houseguest from hell would depart, on[illegible] to slip on the ice again, bringing down th[illegible] curtain on the appalling prospect of mo[illegible] of the same.

They wrote swiftly, as usual, puttin[illegible] Sheridan Whiteside in a wheelchair an[illegible] modeling his every word and action o[illegible] Woollcott. When Woollcott insisted o[illegible] hearing them read the first act, they com[illegible] plied, and Woollcott wondered why th[illegible] were so "guilty-looking."

Whatever else he was, Woollcott wa[illegible] neither fool nor hypocrite. He recognize[illegible] at once that Sheridan Whiteside—describe[illegible] in their pages as a "portly and Falstaffi[illegible] an" presence who "looks like every car[illegible] cature ever drawn of him"—was unmi[illegible] takably himself. He had traded on h[illegible] own eccentricities too shamelessly to b[illegible] offended by Moss and Kaufman's doin[illegible] so now. He later claimed that "I wa[illegible]

Moss barely knew Lerner and Loewe, and the idea of a *Pygmalion* musical caused widespread skepticism on the Rialto.





GENIUS AT WORK
Above, Hart, center, with his ıture associates Alan Jay Lerner (smoking) and Frederick ewe, lunching at Le Pavillon in v York with Kitty and Lerner's fe, in 1955. *Right,* at a *My Fair Lady* rehearsal in London, m left, Hart, Lerner, designer il Beaton, and Cyril Ornadel, the musical director of the London production, in 1958.

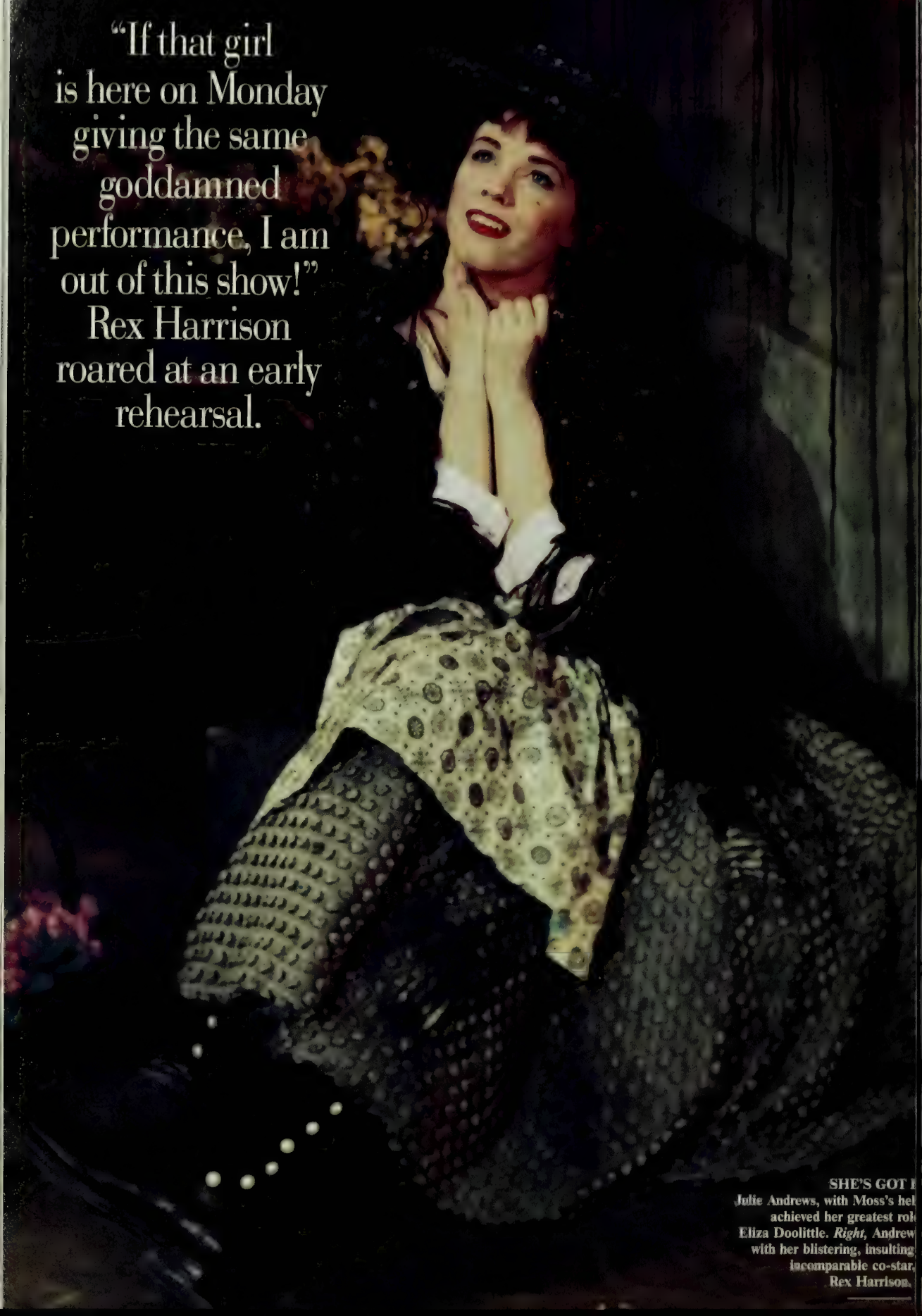
siderably taken aback find they had done a toon of me," adding h characteristic self-preciation, "They had nd it so easy and enter-ing that they could not resist."
A week later he gave them his blessing continue with the play, but surprised m by announcing that he would not y Sheridan Whiteside. Appearing as aself "would be alienating and even of-sive," he said, though not enough to pre-t audiences from clamoring for him to extent that "I might have to stay in v York for two years."
No, he would withdraw in favor of the y actor he could think of who could do n justice—John Barrymore.
Woollcott was serious about Barry-re, and so would Warner Bros. be en it came time to make the movie, but rrymore was in severe alcoholic decline, e to work only with the aid of cue ds. Sheridan Whiteside was a part that uld require timing, rapid-fire delivery, l a certain grandiloquence, which Bar-more could certainly muster, but only if could remember what he was supposed be saying.
Woollcott's withdrawal was not total (he uld play Sheridan Whiteside on the d), but in some ways it was the making of the play. It allowed Moss and Kaufman to write a bravura role without having to tailor it to Woollcott's narrow talents. At the same time, his blessing allowed them to take dramatic advantage of his every foible and eccentricity without seeming to attack the original.

To make sure no one thought they were exploiting a friend and colleague—and to make clear that that was exactly what they were doing—they dedicated the play "To Alexander Woollcott. For reasons that are nobody's business."

It has been suggested that *The Man Who Came to Dinner* is about success, but it isn't. It is about celebrity, something that mattered greatly to Moss. The play doesn't satirize celebrity or celebrity worship; it revels in the fun of celebrity, the privileges that come with fame, the giddy sense of being a somebody among nobodies, the way it lets the famous get away with almost anything. Three of the characters are based obviously on Gertrude Lawrence—whom Moss would later direct in *Lady in the Dark*—and Noël Coward and Harpo Marx, both good friends of his. Celebrity license was central to Woollcott and has changed very little over the years, which is why the play strikes chords with audiences today, in spite of the mostly forgotten names it drops: Zasu Pitts, Haile Selassie, Chauncey Depew, and Admiral Byrd, among dozens of others. The play was revived on Broadway in 1980 and again last year, with the central role played with vitriolic gusto by Nathan Lane.

The Man Who Came to Dinner opened at the Music Box on October 16, 1939, and played for 739 performances. Brooks Atkinson in the *Times* found it "the funniest comedy of the season." Joseph Wood Krutch in *The Nation* thought it "one of the best and funniest," but qualified it as "too bright, too hard, and too compe-

"If that girl is here on Monday giving the same goddamned performance, I am out of this show!" Rex Harrison roared at an early rehearsal.



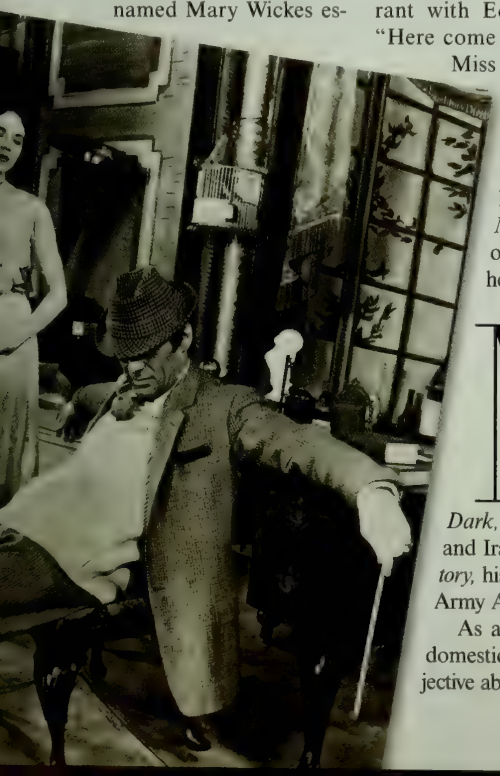
SHE'S GOT I
Julie Andrews, with Moss's hel achieved her greatest rol Eliza Doolittle. *Right,* Andrew with her blistering, insulting incomparable co-star, Rex Harrison.

" with "no real joyousness." Wolcott
os, who knew everybody concerned,
dered in *The New Yorker* how anyone
did not dine frequently at the Algon-
could identify Sheridan Whiteside
"anything in life."

veryone approved the actor playing
title role. When Woollcott withdrew
ı the play and abandoned the notion
Barrymore, his candidate was Robert
ley, a recent success as Oscar Wilde.
ley rejected the part (though he would
it in London and name his son, critic
idan Morley, after the character). It
next offered to Hollywood's Adolph
ıjou, who said no, and finally to Mon-
Woolley, whom Moss had met on a trip
ınd the world they both took with
e Porter and his wife.

Woolley had been acting in New York
Hollywood, but was still known
efly for his association with Porter
sicals and as an eccentric character-
ut-town, as openly gay among the
adway community as anyone in the
0s. *The Man Who Came to Dinner*
his personal triumph and estab-
ed him permanently as an actor in
lywood.

Woolley was not Moss's only friend to
ast in *The Man Who Came to Dinner.*
small role of Sarah, the cook, was
ed by Mrs. Priestly Morrison (that
her stage name), the wife of the direc-
of Moss's very first play, *The Beloved*
dit, who had himself played Grandpa
derhof in the Boston company of *You*
't Take It with You. A newcomer
named Mary Wickes es-



tablished her long career of deadpanning in Hollywood with the role of Nurse Preen.

Another newcomer played Richard Stanley, the photographer son encouraged by Whiteside to defy his family. Moss had met him on *The American Way,* where he played a village youth. His name was Gordon Merrick, and he would one day write *The Lord Won't Mind,* in which he depicted an unmistakably Moss-like character as a sexual predator of young actors.

Gordon Merrick may not have yielded to Moss's charm, but there was someone else in the cast of *The Man Who Came to Dinner* who wanted to. Edith Atwater played Maggie Cutler, Whiteside's personal secretary, on Broadway and on the road and became highly visible on Moss's arm during the play's long run. Janet Fox, who was in *The American Way* and close to Moss, had studied with Atwater at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts and remembered that "she was known as 'Moss's girl,' for a while." Atwater was "slick and smart and from a good family in Chicago," Fox said. "Moss had never met anyone quite like her. She wasn't a society girl, exactly, but a girl of education, and that intrigued him."

Nothing permanent developed, but friends wondered if marriage might not, after all, be lurking in the back of Moss's mind. Cole Porter was married. Alfred Lunt was married. Guthrie McClintic was married. Why not Moss? Woollcott was certain the Hart-Atwater romance had no future. The story circulated that, seeing Moss enter a restaurant with Edith Atwater, he chirped, "Here come Moss Hart and the future Miss Atwater!"

Woollcott could have been depended on, in any case, to get the last word. He got it when *Time* asked him for his opinion of *The Man Who Came to Dinner.* "I only review plays for money," he snapped.

Moss struck out on his own in 1940, writing and directing huge hits such as *Lady in the Dark,* his musical with Kurt Weill and Ira Gershwin, and *Winged Victory,* his wartime effort to benefit the Army Air Corps.

As a perennial bachelor with no domestic ties, he was considered objective about women as he approached and then passed 40, and was, curiously enough, becoming something of a romantic arbiter. Norman Krasna thought so during rehearsals for his play *Dear Ruth,* which Moss directed. Invited to Fairview Farm for a weekend, Krasna took along a woman he was seeing, whose potential as a Hollywood wife he asked Moss to vet. The woman was Kitty Carlisle, on her first visit to Bucks County. Apart from meeting Moss's friends, including actress Dora Sayers (the "Moss's girl" who would tour the South Pacific with him in *The Man Who Came to Dinner* for the U.S.O. during the war) and, for the first and only time, Bea Kaufman, Carlisle was glumly aware that Moss seemed indifferent to her. He told Krasna she was the wrong choice for him, adding, "You see Kitty dressed in black velvet, sweeping down the stairs in your house to greet Louis B. Mayer, and she's not that kind of girl at all."

The kind of girl she was had been born Catherine Conn in New Orleans in 1910. Her mother, Hortense Holtzman, the daughter of the first Jewish mayor of Shreveport, Louisiana, had moved to New Orleans as a young woman to marry a doctor from Mississippi named Joseph Conn—pronounced Kahn, not Cohn.

Hortense Conn played bridge and the violin. She saw to it that her only child studied piano and other disciplines that would "furnish [her] mind" and enable her to "be gracious" anywhere and on any occasion. Young Catherine was dark and pretty, had a gift for music, wore braces, and was utterly dominated by her mother's artistic and social pretensions, summed up in her dictum that in life one should always "go to the top."

When Dr. Conn died in 1920, his widow sold the family house and bundled herself and her daughter off to New York and then to Europe. School in Switzerland would polish Catherine until the braces came off, at which time she could attract a suitable husband, preferably a prince. "To marry European royalty," Hortense believed, "was not nearly so difficult for a Jewish girl" as marrying into high Jewish society in America, where money married money. European royals were too sophisticated to be anti-Semitic, and if they were, a girl could always "pass."

Catherine—Kitty to her classmates—had no particular sense of being Jewish. As an adolescent who had never seen the inside of a synagogue, she briefly considered becoming a nun while in school in

Switzerland; she didn't attend her first Seder until her mid-20s, when George Gershwin took her to one in New York.

To keep globe-trotting while Kitty acquired more social graces, Hortense latched onto gentlemen who could finance visits to the Pyramids and other symbols of grandeur to which she could relate. Following her mother to the Villa d'Este or Venice or the South of France, Kitty learned languages while dealing with porters and waiters, staying in the cheapest rooms in the best hotels. She was both princess-in-training and slavey to a mother who could be peremptory and unpredictable. At times overprotective, Hortense often seemed hardly aware of the awkward teenager struggling with the luggage and running the errands. When she was displeased, her harshness turned to raging withdrawals. She locked her daughter out both physically and emotionally, causing her to be "desperately afraid of any kind of rupture." This fear, Kitty told Marie Brenner, writing about her for *The New Yorker* in the 90s, "has affected every area of my life."

Hortense Conn's whims of iron were both curse and blessing. They forced Kitty to conceal vulnerability beneath a mask of self-confidence while "always pushing our way into places where we didn't belong." She learned to cope with being poor among the rich, and a nobody among somebodies; later she would make the most of being known among the well-known. She learned to use charm as defense and entrée, to be amusing in order "to turn away my mother's wrath." Her entire persona depended on "passing," not as Gentile but as poised, self-assured, and gracious. She might easily have become as selfish and grasping as Hortense; instead, she grew compassionate. She knew what it was to live on the fringes.

She prided herself on being the most attentive of listeners, a companion for whom confrontation and complaint were anathema. This may have been superficial, but survival depended upon it. Equally important was denial, which became a social strategy and a credo. "I believe in denial," she told Marie Brenner. "Denial is a marvelous thing."

Formal schooling ended when Kitty was 14 or 15. Thereafter she was tutored haphazardly, mostly in Paris, where she and her mother relocated after Switzerland. On sojourns to Rome she developed schoolgirl crushes, tried not to appear an adventuress, and discovered singing. In New Orleans as a child she had seen and thrilled to Enrico Caruso. In Rome as an adolescent she observed Arturo Toscanini through the maestro's daughters, who were classmates.

The Crash of 1929 ended a nomadic life that had depended on a strong dollar and the stock-market acumen of Hortense and her various beaux. By then Kitty's desire to sing was serious. She had encounters both encouraging and not with celebrated singers and teachers, and accepted with concealed disappointment ("Be gracious!") their verdict that her pleasant soprano was better suited to operetta than opera.

In London she enrolled at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts, which Hortense pronounced "a ghastly mistake" after seeing her daughter onstage. The Depression forced a return to America but no admissions of defeat. Hortense told Kitty, "You're not the prettiest girl I ever saw, and you're not the best singer I ever heard, and you're certainly not the best actress I ever hoped to see—but if we put them all together, we'll find the husband we're looking for on the stage."

Kitty obediently searched the New York telephone book for a stage name and, after considering Vere de Vere, settled on Carlisle. So did her mother, who became "Hortense Carlisle," widow of the prominent New Orleans physician "Dr. Joseph Carlisle."

Kitty auditioned for and won the title role in *Rio Rita* at the Capitol Theater in 1932. This tab (for tabloid) version of Florenz Ziegfeld's 1927 musical hit was presented between shows in movie houses in New York on the so-called subway circuit before going on national tour. The show was truncated and miked (even in 1932), but led to a Broadway role in pants as Prince Orlovsky in *Champagne Sec,* the *Die Fledermaus* adaptation directed by Monty Woolley in 1933.

Champagne Sec attracted Hollywood attention. Paramount Pictures executives may have thought of her as a younger, darker version of Jeanette MacDonald, whom they had just lost to MGM. They cast her in *Murder at the Vanities,* in which she sang "Cocktails for Two." That was followed by *She Loves Me Not* and *Here Is My Heart,* both starring Bing Crosby. In the first she sang "Love in Bloom," which later became Jack Benny's theme song. In the second she played a poverty-stricken but haughty Russian exile and warbled "June in January."

Paramount was underwhelmed and lent her to MGM and the Marx Brothers fo *Night at the Opera.* "They told me I was wear beautiful clothes and sing Gra Opera!" she later complained to the pl wright George Axelrod. "*You are slummi* I told myself again and again! How v one to know the wretched thing wo become a classic?" Wretched or not gave her another hit song as she and Al Jones sang "Alone" over and over.

To her disappointment, her movie reer never took hold. There was someth too composed about her on-screen; h impressive technique left too little ro for spontaneity and personality. She w too mature to be an ingenue and too st to be a glamour girl, too inexperienced challenge Jeanette MacDonald and too to worry Deanna Durbin.

With no movie offers to follow *A Ni at the Opera,* she returned to New Yo She put on a dirndl for *The White Ho Inn* and looked through a lorgnette *Three Waltzes.* Her one contemporary o ing, *Walk with Music,* was a quick flop spite songs by Hoagy Carmichael a Johnny Mercer.

She kept going. Radio pa the bills with such shows *The Coca-Cola Song Shop* a *The General Motors Conc Hour.* Privately there we suitors of varying intensi including George Gershw novelist Sinclair Lewis, a dashing Braz ian diplomat, and her agent, Arthur Lyo She was later to claim that the relatio ship with Lyons was all in his Russia immigrant head and in gossip-colun items he planted. Louella Parsons, for e ample, told her readers that Kitty w "one swell girl" whose "romance wi agent Arthur Lyons is coming along nic ly." Kitty demanded no retractions, a when Lyons bought her jewels, she ke them.

If Lyons's appeal was debatable, his ut ity was not. He represented not only K ty but also Jack Benny, Hedy Lamarr, Ic Lupino, Fred MacMurray, and others. 1940 he decided to become a film produ er and make Kitty the movie star she'd ways dreamed of being. She returned wi him to Hollywood, where he took a d plex apartment at the Sunset Towers Sunset Boulevard. He formed a compa called Producing Artists, Inc., and Kit was soon back before the cameras. Universal she was reunited with her *Night at the Opera* co-star Allan Jones in second-half-of-the-double-bill mistake call *Larceny with Music,* which even at 64 mi utes was enough CONTINUED ON PAGE



ICON STATUS
Moss Hart, photographed by Irving Penn for *Vogue* in 1948, when Hart was preparing to direct *Miss Liberty,* the musical by Irving Berlin and Robert E. Sherwood.


Call of the Wild
PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID LaCHAPELLE

Throwing mad parties, stealing from the White House, dating Jack Nicholson—Lara Flynn Boyle is a self-confessed Bad Girl, with a hard-as-nails image to match her role as the tough D.A. on ABC's The Practice. *KEVIN SESSUMS and the 30-year-old vamp, who plays a sex therapist in the upcoming Bill Murray movie,* Speaking of Sex, *tackle some provocative issues: why women don't like her, the (false) rumor that she broke up Harrison Ford's marriage, and what draws a Chicago-bred Bulls fan to the Lakers-loving Nicholson*



HOT WATER
Lara Flynn Boyle, photographed in Malibu, California, on November 15, 2000.

It is Sunday-brunch time, and actress Lara Flynn Boyle makes her entrance into the Polo Lounge in the Beverly Hills Hotel, gathering her full-length rabbit coat about her. It is the kind of coat—though sleeker, a Fred Segal find—worn by silent-screen sirens back in the 1920s. Boyle, who is about to turn 31, does indeed have a bit of the bitter dazzle of a Fitzgerald flapper. She first got noticed in David Lynch's television cult classic, *Twin Peaks,* and she would be the perfect size-2 Daisy Buchanan in a Lynch remake of *The Great Gatsby.*

She removes a pearled cigarette box from her purse and takes out the first of many Marlboros she will have during our interview. "I'm the kind of woman who, when she walks into a party, all the other women leave the room," she says, lighting up unassisted. "Which makes me feel neither powerful nor insecure. It just makes me feel sad for other women. . . . I don't think a lot of women like me out here. I think I'm scary to people. They think I'm a bit of a ball-buster. Of course, that might have to do with my character on *The Practice,*" she says, referring to Helen Gamble, the tough-as-nails district attorney she portrays on David E. Kelley's Emmy-winning ABC drama.

"She is not a Good Girl," says the star of *The Practice,* Dylan McDermott. He and his wife, Iranian beauty Shiva Rose, are two of Boyle's closest friends. "Lara is a throwback to Marlene Dietrich and Bette Davis and those kinds of Hollywood dames. That's why older guys are attracted to her . . . well, older guys who have not been 'therapized.' Younger guys have been so therapized that they are a little afraid of a woman like her. They are scared to enter. And if they do: beware."

"What constitutes a Bad Girl out here is having a personality," says Boyle. "A sense of humor. An opinion. Confidence. Seizing the moment. So I guess I'm a Bad Girl. Women are just judged differently. If a guy is young and somewhat successful and going out and being seen with women, it's no big deal. I mean, I'm not married, so . . . "

"Are you wife material?" I ask.

"I would like to *have* a wife. Who wouldn't? Let's see, what does a wife encompass exactly?" she asks, surveying the ladies brunching around us. "A housemate. Maybe a pool boy. Does laundry. Misses out on all the fun. Doesn't sound too great, does it?" Boyle lights another cigarette and lets it linger in her mouth as she turns back to the subject of Hollywood parties. She reminisces about one she threw for herself several years ago at the Mondrian Hotel, a legendary event in the developing lore of the New Hollywood that rivaled an Old Hollywood soirée in the town's one requisite ingredient: raucous glamour. "I put right on the invitation that women must wear their war paint. Had some reggae bands. It was huge. *Huge.* People ended up reserving suites, so it took over the entire hotel. The police shut it down. It was great."

"What makes a good party?" I ask.

She stops mid-puff. "Drag queens and a dress code," she says.

AN ONLY CHILD, Boyle grew up Irish Catholic on the Nor Side of Chicago. She moved to Los Angeles with her moth the day after she graduated from high school. Within a week s had landed the *Twin Peaks* role, and she has never stopp working since. Her screen credits include *Happiness, Wayn World,* and the upcoming Bill Murray comedy, *Speaking of Se* in which she plays a sex therapist.

Severely dyslexic, she struggled through her early years. "I d not have a great childhood," she says, running a hand throu her hair, which she has to have dyed every two weeks to keep raven sheen. "Went gray at 17. Started smoking these," she say waving a Marlboro at me, "when I was 13. No money. A shit f ther who divorced my mother when I was six. . . . I got a terrib education from the nuns and Jesuits. They kept flunking me ar saying I wasn't participating. I grew up thinking I was stupid. got beat up a lot by the boys. I was tortured in school. My nic name was Pootie Boobless. My posture was terrible, because didn't want anybody to see that I was so underdeveloped." S when did she finally sprout? "I didn't sprout," she says, "I ju got more confident. I never had any sprouting going on. It's a about the nipple," she says, sounding—though she insists sh doesn't want children—quite maternal.

Has she ever been therapized?

"Yeah, periodically."

"Still go to confession?" I ask.

"Nooooo," she says, laughing at the very thought. "I used to l in confession all the time. I'd never tell them what I really did. Ne er. I don't trust the Catholic Church. My mom and dad were ma ried in the Catholic Church, and then my dad wanted to remarr and he had his marriage to my mom annulled, which makes m . . . you know . . . " Boyle's voice trails off. There's a crack for th first time in her old-time movie-star moxie. She takes a momen then squares her shoulders. "Which makes me a bastard," she say

"WENT TO THE LAKER GAME LAST NIGHT," she tel me a few days later, which in Los Angeles parlance is shorthan for Yeah-I'm-still-dating-Jack-Nicholson, who, at 63, is the grand est father figure such a place has to offer, though Boyle smirk at the suggestion that this might be the reason for her attractio to him. "Oh, please," she says. "The whole country has a love a fair with Jack. Why can't I?" Their much-chronicled, on-again off-again relationship is definitely on again this November afte noon here in Malibu, where Boyle is ensconced in a makeup cha inside a trailer in the parking lot of Duke's, the famed surfers hangout. Up the Pacific Coast Highway a few hundred yards, see-through bathtub is being readied for her nude submersion Right now, however, she's studying her script for *The Practic* while her pedicure is being finished, her hair is being unrolled and her eyes are being heavily accentuated by Elizabeth Taylor' makeup artist, Francesca Tolot, the blackened eyebrows growin to Elizabethan proportions.

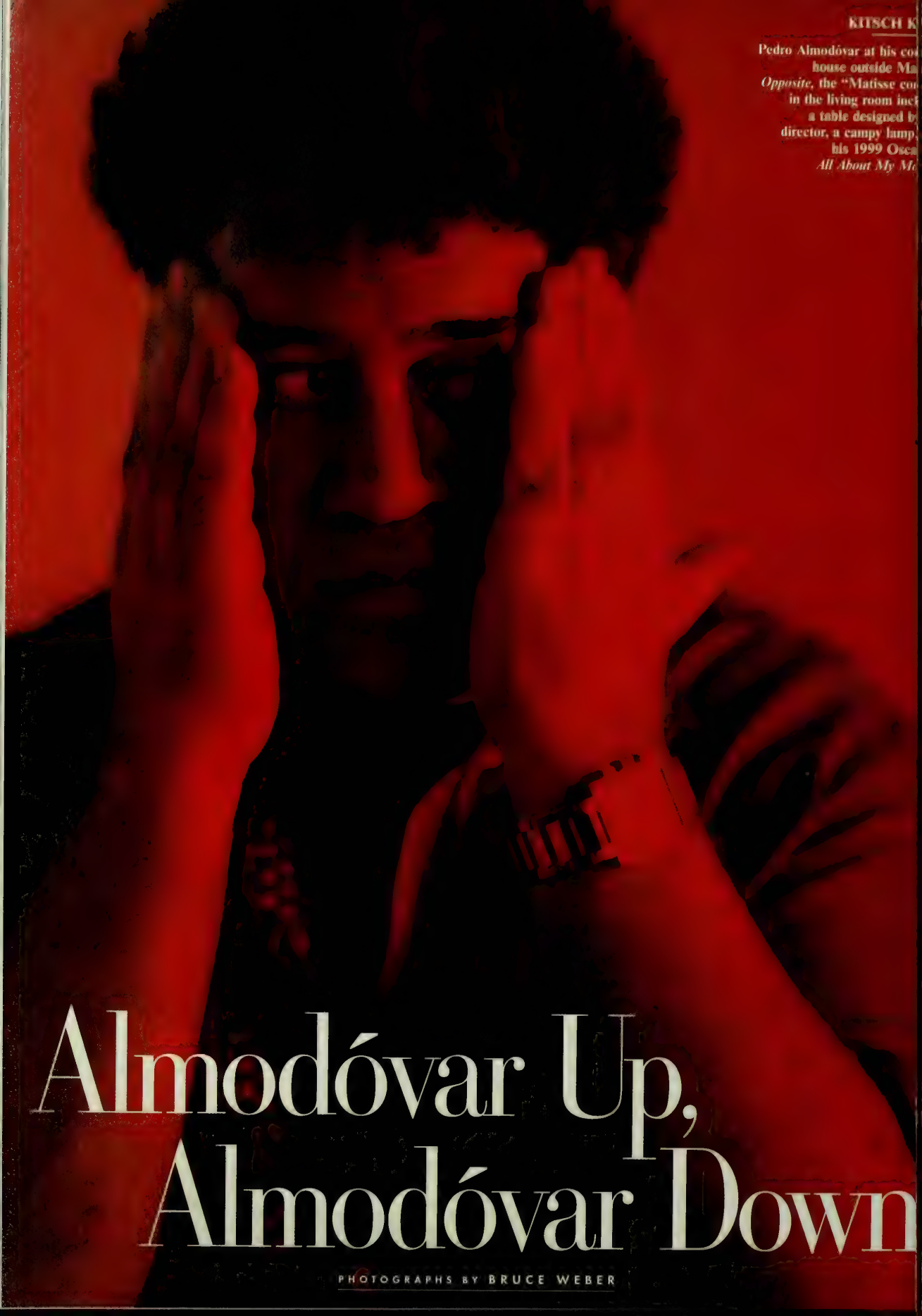
Boyle met "the Chief," as she calls Nicholson, at another rau cous Hollywood party, when she was trying to find a bathroom and stumbled upon him having a cigarette behind a closed door They've been carrying on that initial conversation ever since. Doe she feel like the First Lady of L.A. when she's with him, whethe it's at an awards event or a Hollywood premiere or the Oscar de la Hoya–Felix Trinidad prizefight? "No. Jack is solo, solo, solo. And he should always be. He can stimulate me mentally, too, you know It's a learning experience, being around him. He's a brilliant man."

"What's more exciting," I ask, "having CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

I'm the kind of woman who, when she walks into a party, all the other women leave the room."



GIRL
n Boyle says, "Went to the [illegible] last night," that's shorthand os Angeles parlance, for 'Had [illegible] dating-Jack-Nicholson.



KITSCH K

Pedro Almodóvar at his co
house outside Ma
Opposite, the "Matisse co
in the living room incl
a table designed b
director, a campy lamp,
his 1999 Osca
All About My Mo

Almodóvar Up, Almodóvar Down

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRUCE WEBER



Pedro Almodóvar's movies—from *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* to the Oscar-winning *All About My Mother* and his forthcoming *Bad Education*—reflect his role as the quirkily flamboyant toast of Madrid. But they also stem from a cautious, hidden Almodóvar. COLM TÓIBÍN finds the marks of the director's inner struggle, including his tortured year of military service and his search for the woman who gave voice to his passion and pain


Almodóvar's mark,
which you see
in his films, is everywhere.
Garish colors
placed close to other
garish colors.

Madrid, for Pedro Almodóvar, is still a place of mystery and glamour and excitement. But when he walks the streets now, everybody wants to have a photograph taken with him, or video him, or get his autograph. We are standing waiting to pay after a lunch at an outdoor café, and he is impatient. One part of him dislikes all the attention, wishes he could be more anonymous in the ' he spent his childhood dreaming about. Someone was video- him as he ate and now someone else comes up asking for an ograph. Almodóvar looks glum and wants to get this over h, briskly taking a pen and a piece of paper. And then some- ıg happens, as it always does. He catches the eye of his fan, he makes a remark, and suddenly his face breaks open, he rts to joke and laugh, he starts to perform. It is as though he d a new friend. The Almodóvar who just one minute ago nted peace and privacy has gone indoors.

He spends a lot of time indoors these days, in his apartment the center of Madrid. He could not imagine writing in the ıntryside. He loves the city, the buzz of the streets, even when is protected from the noise by double windows. This is how writes his scripts, using the part of himself that is private, de- erate, and solitary, the part of himself that no one is allowed se to, and hardly anyone knows about.

The next morning, in the café opposite his apartment, he ps his head down, his face expressionless. He is preoccupied, esn't want to talk. He quietly orders a coffee. When I mention nutual friend, a painter and performer I knew in Barcelona 25 ırs ago and he knew, too, he talks about his death calmly and dly. Our friend was a painter but, Almodóvar agrees, not a od painter; his real talent lay in what he did to his own body, own face, when he dressed up as a señorita from Seville, in borate and colorful dress and headgear, and walked the streets went to festivals. Both of us knew him in the late 1970s, when was funny and outrageous, and both of us grow silent now, ce Almodóvar discovers that I know how he ended. Dressed Apollo, all in paper, our friend went to a festival where he s set on fire and died.

Almodóvar is one of the survivors. From the time he went to ndon in the early 1970s to the period when he hung out with wild crowd in Madrid and Barcelona in the years after Gen- alissimo Franco's death, he has managed to come through wis- and reasonably unscathed and with stories to tell. He knows ıt and thinks about it, and it gives him a sort of melancholy ength and solitariness to place beside his extroverted and flam- yant self and his love of the bizarre and the quirky.

In those years, he, more than any of the others, would have laughed at the idea of a country house, but that is where we are going now, to Pedro Almodóvar's country house, which is half an hour out of Madrid in a development protected by a security guard. This is where he comes to play with his family and friends. His brother, Agustín, who is o his executive producer, has two young sons who love the imming pool and the tennis courts and the pool table and the ıse of freedom. This is a place for parties and gatherings.

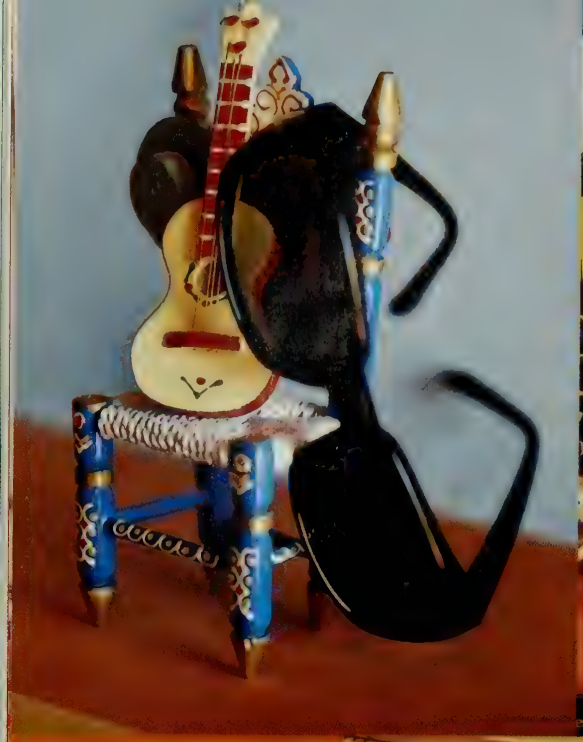
From the outside the house is an ordinary suburban dwelling, nost nondescript. But once you go inside, Almodóvar's mark,



CLOWN PRINCE

Almodóvar entertains his guests outside his country house. *Below,* the colorful back of the house, which gives onto bare fields, with mountains in the distance. *Opposite,* in the kitchen the refrigerator and stove are painted bright orange, set off by primary-colored tiles. Outlandish objects and ordinary ornaments are gathered together as though they were prized collectors' items.











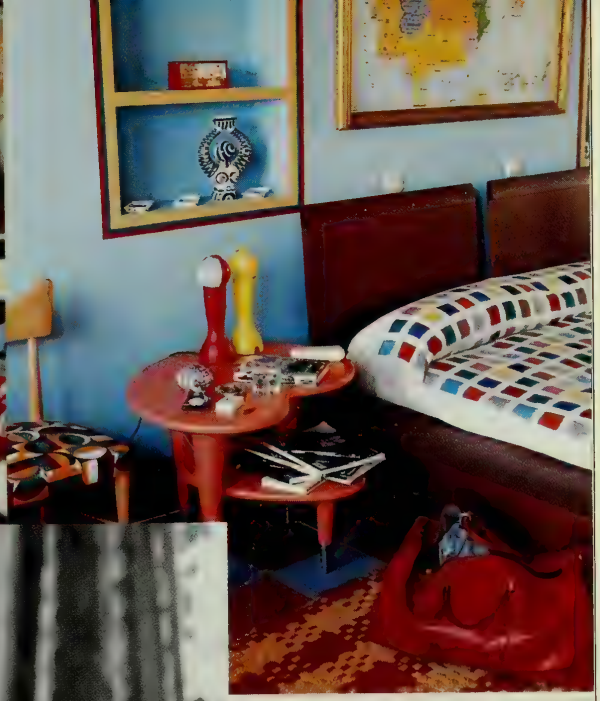
FUN HOUSE

Clockwise from above: on the nightstand in Almodóvar's bedroom, a miniature Flamenco chair holds his sunglasses; a poster for *All About My Mother* (1999) partially covers one for *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* (1988) at Almodóvar's offices in Madrid; an Alberto Vargas print hangs in the living room of the country house, above a console loaded with playful objects and the peripatetic Oscar; Almodóvar swats balls on his tennis court to the amusement of friends; the combined poolroom and dining room, with crucifixes and sunbursts over the door

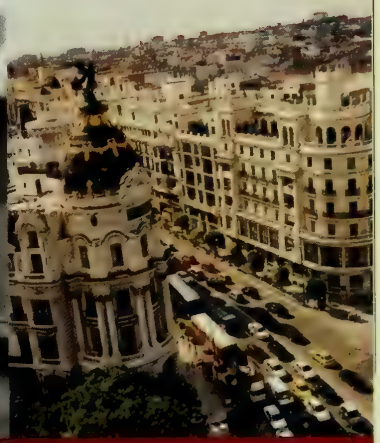














TOWN AND COUNTRY

Clockwise from top left: Almodóvar, his production-company collaborator Fernando Iglesias, and his guests are served lunch by María, the cook; Almodóvar's bedroom, with a map of Spain on the wall; the view of Madrid from the windows of Almodóvar's production company, El Deseo S.A.; the director's office at El Deseo S.A.; Almodóvar at the pool with Iglesias; lining up a shot.



which you see in his films, is everywhere. Garish colors placed close to other garish colors, yellows and reds, amazing blues. In the kitchen the refrigerator and stove are painted orange. Outlandish objects, ordinary ornaments, and pieces of kitsch are gathered together as though they were prized collectors' items. The house itself is a form of entertainment. Over one door there are versions of the Crucifixion beside sunbursts in various styles. Every object seems chosen for its craziness. This is the public Almodóvar, the partygoer who clearly loved placing the yellow-framed photographs of relatives and friends in the hallway carefully askew. Nothing is symmetrical in his world.

The back of the house gives onto bare fields, the dry, washed colors of Castile with the sierra in the distance. He likes the privacy here, but nature puzzles him, bores him. He likes the garden but doesn't tend it himself. "I like to have it," he says, "but I don't communicate with flowers." He grins to himself at such an unlikely idea. He enjoys playing the host, putting on loud music, making jokes. In his bedroom, he looks in the mirror and makes faces at himself. He is trying to lose weight, he says. (This doesn't prevent him from ordering fried eggs and fried potatoes the next day.) He narrows his eyes at the mirror and grins in mock despair. He doesn't like his face, he says. He examines himself carefully. His face is amazingly flexible and lived-in. He frowns at himself and gives a magnificent shrug before getting ready to go downstairs.

In his work he plays with opposites and doubles and secret identities. So now when he struts out of the house in his tennis gear, you know that one more of his own hidden identities has just appeared. He is all business. His face is serious, his expression set. He looks like a guy who would lead a heavy-duty marketing drive, or a leader who could turn the economy around. You don't mess with Pedro Almodóvar in tennis gear.

When he starts to play, it is clear that he has no style; there is nothing flamboyant about the way he moves and responds. But even when he's fooling around on the court, he's serious and determined. He doesn't want to waste time; he suggests we get down to business and play the best of three. He likes things to be structured. His opponents call him the Wall, because he will hit anything back. Playing against him, he says with pride, is like Chinese water torture. He doesn't hit winners, and he doesn't place the ball with any great skill, but he takes enormous care to make no mistakes. He is oddly awkward, but in deadly earnest. He is all stamina and brute strength. And if you hit a winner down the side, he doesn't look disappointed or hurt but goes and gets the ball and starts again. Nothing fazes him or frightens him. If you were asked to judge his character on the basis of his game, you would say that he is cautious and consistent, almost boring; he takes no risks, he is a plodder, you could think, a worker, dull and methodical. After a few games, you could confidently make him your accountant or your project manager.

He was the little boy who couldn't stop singing. Born in 1951 and brought up in provincial Spain, a world he describes as isolated, austere, and sober, he remembers images of the Virgin and the crucifix and some photographs of family as the only decorations in the house. At the age of 10 he was a star in school. At night when all the other boys in the dormitory were undressing and getting ready for bed, his job was to read them the lives of the saints, gruesome, bloody, and action-packed stories, as he remembers, and he is deeply aler the peculiar, raw sensuality of the scene. He read the stories the martyrs and saints with the same relish that he did the venture stories he also read aloud to the whole school fro podium during mealtimes. He was the only one chosen to r like this. He loved the Gregorian chants, singing the Latin m anything that involved performance. But he did not like priests, and he did not enjoy his religious education.

His rebellion began in adolescence. His contact with the side world came from the radio and pop magazines. In a wo that was fearful and conformist, his long hair caused conster tion. He wanted to go to the city, but his father found him a in a local bank. In Spain in those years, if you found a job, took it and kept it and considered yourself lucky. That ba with his father is still vivid for him. "He didn't understand m he says. "He didn't know how to use his authority." But Pe Almodóvar was absolutely sure what he had to do: he had to to Madrid, and he knew even then that he wanted to make fil

He is still basking in the sheer joy of those early years Madrid. There was a singer he came across then, on reco and on the radio; he knew she lived in the city, and there something about her gravelly voice, a raw, melodramatic ener a sense of pain and hurt and infinite loss, that he wanted bac Her singing was self-exposure, her expression a form of heal or redemption, and he loved the idea of that. The sheer force her pride and solitude and sadness meant everything to t adolescent boy new to the city. The singer's name was Chav Vargas. "I went everywhere in search of her," he says, "but s had gone." Yes, people told him, she had been in the city, b there was no trace of her now.

In the late 1960s in Madrid and Barcelona, young people l haved as though Franco, dictator since the end of the Civil W in 1939, were already dead, although he did not really die u 1975. Nonetheless, Franco managed to close the film school Madrid just as Almodóvar thought of going there, thus forci him to teach himself and forge his own style. Pedro hung arou with the hippies and the purveyors of counterculture in the Pla Santa Ana and on the streets around it. He went to every film could. He wrote poetry and stories and got to know people fr the theater. "I am," he says, "still in recovery from that time."

But there are two stories he tells that show other pects of him, that illustrate his essential toughne and determination, his stubbornness, self-disciplin and will to survive. Not to speak of his char Military service in Spain in those years was t bane of everyone's life. Just as you had fallen love, or just as you had fallen in with the hip crowd, you wou be dragged off for a horrible haircut and forced to spend a ye in the army. Everyone loathed it, but Almodóvar's response w particularly intense.

He describes it as an absolute nightmare, and his reaction w to build a crust around himself. "I did not say a word to anyo for 12 months," he says. The little boy who had been the pries favorite and was popular among his fellows, the adolescent wh had managed to make peace with his parents and find a who world of friendship in Madrid, decided that he did not wa anyone to know him. Not just the officers, but the other so diers as well. He read Proust, he says. And in the dormitory l listened with distaste to the conversations about sex. "All rit interest me," he says, "especially the Catholic ceremonies as th

"From the minute I began," Almodóvar says, "no matter how small the venue, I could make people roar with laughter."



NG HEIGHTS

n exterior staircase high up Círculo de Bellas Artes, óvar looks out over Madrid.



HOT TIME

Clockwise from above, start of latter: Jean Paul Gaultier, the designer, with social figure Gloria Ocharán; dancer Marisol Muriel with shapely Bibiana Fernández; Spanish folksinger Martirio with her son, Raul, on guitar; Almodóvar, Gaultier, and their hostess, Elena Benarroch (in the white dress); Almodóvar next to former prime minister Felipe González; Almodóvar with the singer Chavela Vargas; Spanish actress Concha Velasco; close-up of Martirio singing.



ater, but the military doesn't." He has no friends from that time.

In Madrid he worked at various jobs, but eventually he took tests and had an interview for a job in the national telephone company. For the interview, he managed to disguise his long hair by using hair oil and putting it in a bun, but when he arrived at his new job, no one would work with him. Long hair was still considered scandalous. "But there was a limit to their power," he says. "They couldn't just fire someone for having long hair. I enjoyed the crisis." He took pleasure in watching them work out what they were going to do. Finally, one of them relented and agreed to work with him. Within two months, he says, he had won the rest of them over.

His job was to exchange new telephones for old ones, and to his delight he began to meet a new breed, and they would help him make his name. "It put me in contact with the Spanish middle classes," he says. He had not known them before, and he had an opportunity to study middle-class women from Madrid at a time of social change, when everyone in the city was going through an identity crisis of some sort and the dictatorship was coming to an end.

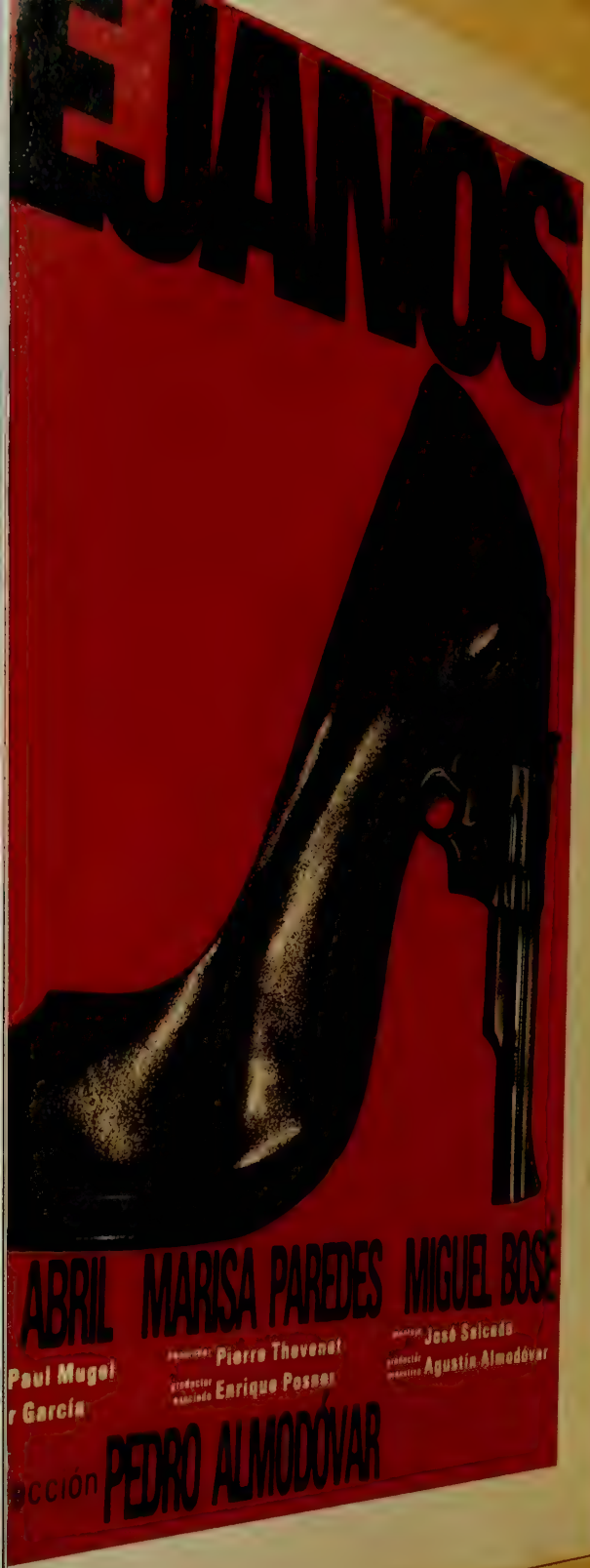
He bought a super-8 camera with his first paycheck, and showed his films wherever he could. His work was different: he told stories while others made vague, arty, and conceptual films. "From the minute I began," he says, "no matter how small the venue, I could make people roar with laughter." Among the super-8 people, he stood out as too populist, but once he began to make full-length films—and he made his first one while still working at the telephone company—he stood out from the other Spanish filmmakers, who were obsessed with the Civil War. His civil war had been with his father, and what he saw around him was far more interesting—Madrid on the verge of a nervous breakdown.

Almodóvar has been working on a new script, using some of these memories for the first time. The film, which will be released in about a year, is called in Spanish *La Mala Educación,* which in English means both "bad manners" and "bad education." One section of the film is set in the 1960s; he uses his own school days and the relationships between the priests and the boys, filled with tension and duplicity. The second half is set in Madrid in the early 1980s, the years of the "*movida,*" the years of drugs and sex and general craziness. Two of the boys from the school are in their 30s now, inhabiting the fraught and exciting city which Pedro himself enjoyed so much. They meet one of the priests, who has left the fold but whose personality has not changed.

Almodóvar is nervous because he will have to work with child actors. He wants to make sure that working in his film does not damage them the way his religious education did him. There will be limited roles for women in the film, and he is going to use friends. This film will not be directly autobiographical, he says, but it will use things he felt and experienced in "the hell that was school."

Elena Benarroch made the fur coat fashionable again in Spain, and she has the look, as she stands in the hallway of her apartment, north of central Madrid, of a serious party giver. Her living room is a party giver's dream, and her guest list tonight will make the society columns of all the Spanish newspapers; the society magazine *¡Hola!* will devote two pages to it.

The party is for the designer Jean Paul Gaultier, but it is also an excuse for mixing all the elements that make up Madrid and seeing what will happen. Former Socialist prime minister Felipe





Elena Benarroch's party is an excuse for mixing all the elements that make up Madrid and seeing what will happen.

N LANGUAGE

actress Loles León, has appeared in several of dóvar's films, does a turn for uests at the party. *Opposite,* e Almodóvar's offices, the name s company, El Deseo S.A., the door, and a poster for his film, *Tacones Lejanos,* l *High Heels* in English, s one wall.





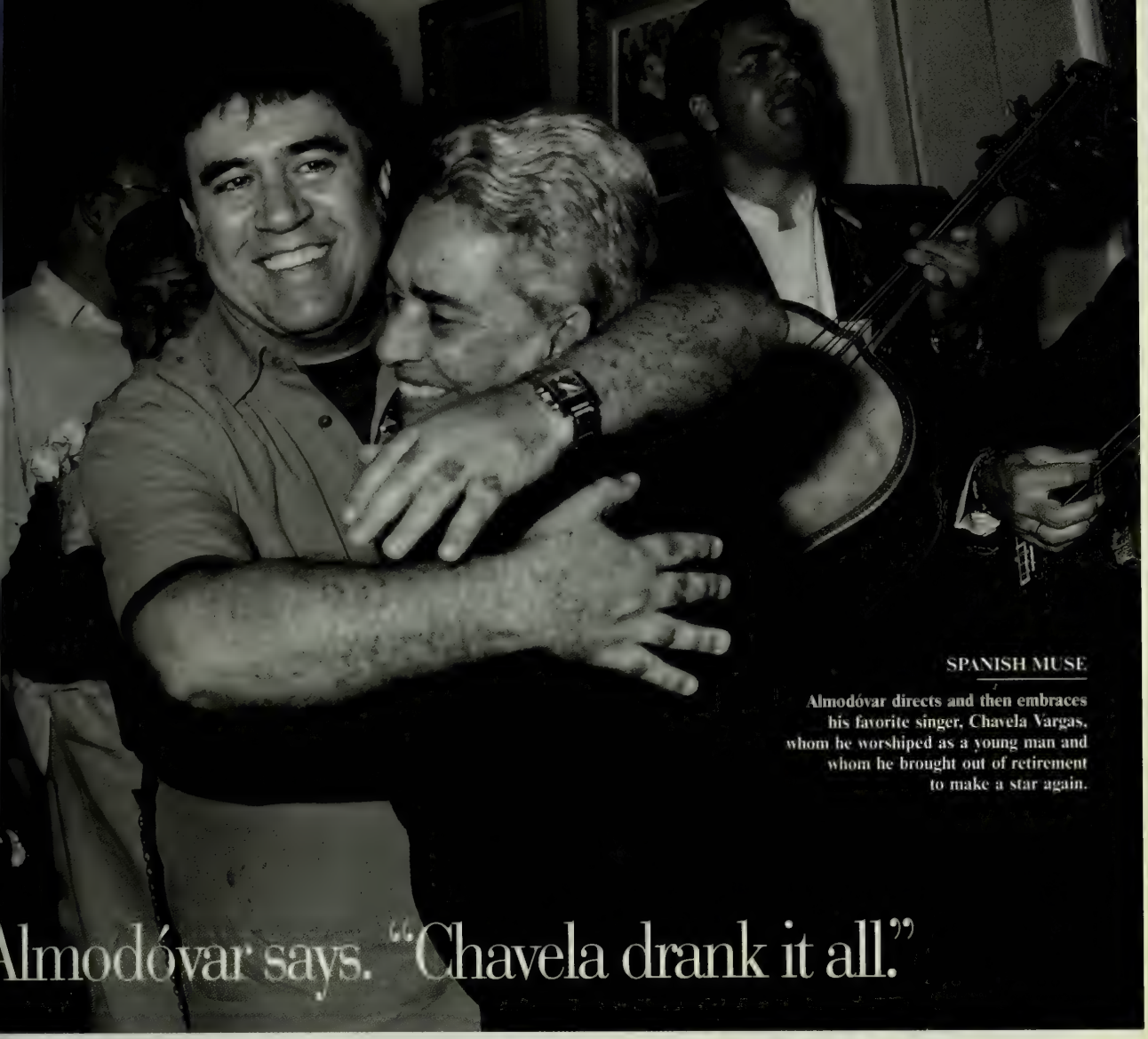
"There is no good tequila in Mexico anymore

González is here with his wife, Carmen Romero, as is General Franco's granddaughter Carmen Martínez-Bordiú. Almodóvar is here, and many others from the Spanish cinema. The room is overflowing with actors and models. Someone points out the latest star of Spanish television and a beautiful young man fresh from Cuba. As a long-standing devotee of *¡Hola!,* I know for sure that I am in my element when I see Isabel Preysler coming into the room. She is the most famous woman in Spain. Part of her mystery and allure is that she is not an actress or a performer but is known simply from the society pages and the covers of magazines. Everyone in Spain can name her husbands: the singer Julio Iglesias, then the Marquis of Griñón, and now the politician Miguel Boyer.

Every time I look for Almodóvar, I find him talking to the same woman. Sometimes their conversation is full of laughter, but once when I look over, they are locked in a grave, deep exchange, as though they are hearing each other's confessions or discussing their tax returns. The woman could be in her 70s. She is short, her hair is gray and cut close, her skin is nut brown, her eyes are the most alert and alive in the room. The aura around her is one of immense sadness and immense power.

I know who she is, because earlier in the day Almodóva has told me the story. She is Chavela Vargas, the woma whose voice haunted him when he was a kid, the woma he searched for when he first came to Madrid. She gav up singing for 25 years, during which she lived it up an then lived it down in Mexico. ("There is no good tequil in Mexico anymore," Almodóvar says. "Chavela drank it all." And then the woman he calls the high priestess of pain cam back to Madrid. This was the only time, he says, when his fam was useful. He set about making Chavela famous all over agai He went with her to the smallest venues, introduced her, cajole people to listen to her. He used her in his films *Kika* and *Th Flower of My Secret.* Her voice was as expressive and precise a ever. Her face, Almodóvar says, is the face of a primitive god. you go into a music shop in Madrid now, you will find all h old work reissued and all her new work for sale. She is a star.

Now she is going to sing, and Almodóvar is going to sin with her to start things off, and they need to create space in th crowded room. Looking around, I notice that another grea Spanish singer, Martirio, has arrived at the party with her so Raul, who normally accompanies her on the guitar. I setth



SPANISH MUSE

Almodóvar directs and then embraces his favorite singer, Chavela Vargas, whom he worshiped as a young man and whom he brought out of retirement to make a star again.

Almodóvar says. "Chavela drank it all."

wn with a large drink near the piano. Felipe González comes er, too, in order to be close to the music.

Chavela's voice can go from being melancholy and breathy to unding tobacco-stained and fierce. She sings her heart out as group gathers around her. Some of the songs tell of an inexssible sadness. Almodóvar cannot take his eyes off her. He es this melodrama, and he acts as if he were directing her, iling at her and gesturing, as though pulling the song out of r. Come on, he seems to suggest, more emotion, give it more. e watches him and smiles darkly, loving him back.

And then something astonishing happens. Chavela begins anher song, this one even sadder than the last. If you leave me, u will ruin my world, the words tell us, and Chavela sings ese words as though she really means them. I can see Almovar's face clearly, and he is crying. He is following the words though everything depended on them. His face is like a ild's, and he is listening to the song as a child will listen to a ory. He is letting it enter his spirit. For days he has been comaining to me about his appearance, how much he hates it; in ose moments as the song comes to an end, and Chavela sings t the concluding stanza ("If you leave me, I will die"), he looks incredibly beautiful. As she finishes, I notice that Martirio's son, who is accompanying Chavela on the guitar, also has tears in his eyes. I want this night to go on forever.

It does. By about 2:30, everyone, led by Elena Benarroch, is brave enough to begin throwing red carnations out of vases at Chavela, Martirio, and Raul. Everybody is calling for more. The waiters are still serving drinks. Almodóvar continues to watch his old friend, and she is surpassing herself, shouting out her rage and passion with her arms outstretched.

In a room full of the rich and the beautiful and the powerful, he has paid no attention to anyone else all night. And now it's getting late, and there are interruptions and sideshows. Almodóvar has no patience with this. All the aspects that make up his complex personality are now on display: he wants to direct Chavela Vargas; he wants to cry; he wants to relive his youth; he cannot stop watching this strong woman who has perfected the art of self-expression and self-invention; and he cannot handle this show's being interrupted. I watch him deciding, just like that, that he's going to go. I watch his face change back to the serious, determined survivor who loves managing chaos, but hates having it get beyond his control. In one second, he's gone.

Keanu Reeves

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 111 D-cup-bearing witness to the quantum physics of Keanumania.

When Reeves enters, stage left, the entire squealing audience stands. But only the left side remains standing, giving the crowd a strangely lopsided feel. When Reeves moves toward stage right, the human wave follows him, then follows him back. The band ignores this. Reeves is sweating through his black T-shirt and jeans. He neither sings nor speaks, just plays his bass guitar. He has no microphone. A fan screams, "Shake your ass, you fucking god!" Reeves plays on. This is his life.

Reeves is 36. He has appeared in 35 films, a huge number for an actor his age, and has starred in two of the biggest and best action blockbusters of the 1990s, *Speed* and *The Matrix,* which together have grossed more than $800 million worldwide. He has few, if any, enemies in the film community, and he is consistently praised for his work ethic, his integrity, his humility, his utter lack of Hollywood guile. Young men envy Reeves—his guy's-guy demeanor, his penchant for motorcycle crashes, his mastery of the reluctant-action-hero genre, his flawless grasp of the word "dude," his occasional unwillingness to groom, his willingness to bomb around the country with his band in a *van.*

And, needless to say, he is catnip to the ladies. One of his best friends, an L.A.-based entrepreneur named Josh Richman, calls him "an estrogen magnet."

"No way!" Reeves cries in that charmingly dudish way of his. He's sitting in the bar at Casa del Mar, a swanky beachside hotel in Santa Monica, nursing a Stoli Bloody Mary and staring down at a grainy photograph of his spleen (check that: *alleged spleen*) downloaded from a Web site dedicated to him. He stares at the meaty, misshapen organ for several seconds. He is a shade over six feet tall and an almost perfect male specimen. Thanks to his daily regimen for the *Matrix* sequels—including specialty training such as flipping, weapons, wire work and choreography, along with 90 minutes of stretching and 60 minutes of *kicking*—he looks gleamingly fit, in a Dark Angel of Death sort of way: dark boots, dark jeans, dark T-shirt, dark fleece jacket, dark scarf, dark coat. Plus the dark hair, the dark stubble, and the lively dark eyes, which, thanks to the spleen sitting before him, have widened into Frisbees.

"They just put up a picture of a *spleen?*" he asks.

They say it's *your* spleen, he is told. Removed by surgeons after one of the two motorcycle crashes, in 1988 and 1996, which left him battered and broken. He is asked to claim his spleen.

"Well," he says, "my spleen is still in my body."

So this couldn't conceivably be . . .

"This is *not* my piece of ham. It's still in."

He begins reading from the "The Keanuville Medical Archives," specifically: "If anyone has any other body parts of Keanu, we'd like to place them on display. This would include . . . suture clippings from his surgeries and wound repairs, extracted teeth, extracted moles, cysts or boils, hair clippings, beard stubble and even excretia [*sic*]." Reeves reads aloud from the site's rules and stipulations: "Please, folks . . . dirty laundry and used condoms are *not* considered body parts." He laughs heartily, says, "Now *that's* funny," and reads on. Under "Keanu's Toilet Paper Origami Page," he unearths a photograph of a pathetic little toilet-paper swan purported to be a courtship gift he presented to an uninterested woman in the bathroom of the Troubadour, a popular L.A. rock club. "You know," Reeves says, looking up, "I didn't make this particular piece."

More laughter. If people want to exchange his spurious spleen or ersatz origami, that's cool with him. Pretty much anything is cool with him. He's Tao that way.

"Keanu has an ability to handle stress in a way that's really admirable," says his costar in *The Matrix,* Carrie-Anne Moss. "I think he's Zen-*like.* I definitely think he has moments like that, and I think that, absolutely, it affects the other actors he works with. It affects *me.* You know, there's not one bit of movie-star ego in that guy. . . . He's incredibly focused and incredibly disciplined, and I mean unlike anyone I've ever met."

And yet . . . And yet. There are people in the world who, deep in the fiber of their souls, resent Reeves. His acting. His success. His very essence.

Indeed, militant anti-Keanu forces have fashioned a popular Web site called "The Keanu Report," a forum dedicated to proving, perhaps only half-jokingly, that "Keanu Reeves is the manifestation of evil on Earth, the Anti-Christ." There have been scurrilous rumors, usually involving sex and drugs. (For the record: No, he is not a junkie. Yes, he likes women. And, yes, the marriage-to-David Geffen rumor, which was making the rounds in 1995, is rubbish—splendid rubbish, but rubbish nonetheless.)

Meantime, back on Earth, film critics have, on more than one occasion, been merciless. Reeves has been called "wooden" and "robotic," and one critic said, "Offhand I can't think of an actor who could use a brain implant more." "I'm the critics' favorite whipping boy," Reeves once said, and that was not inaccurate. Sometimes th critics were correct. In the oddly pleasu able 1991 heist picture *Point Break,* Reeve generally charming performance as a su ing F.B.I. agent named Johnny Utah—w nearly obliterated by a handful of line rea ings which were, in a word, excruciating.

Then again, Reeves can be his ow worst critic, once dismissing his perfo mance in Francis Ford Coppola's 1992 a aptation of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* by sa ing, "I kinda stunk." Reeves has since u graded his self-assessment a notch, b still. "He's really a dedicated craftsma who's most relentless on himself until h gets it right," says director Sam Rai (1998's *A Simple Plan,* the forthcomi *Spider-Man*), who cast Reeves as an ab sive redneck in *The Gift,* a just-released s pernatural thriller co-written by Billy Bo Thornton. "He has a severe intensity. A ter a take, he'd step outside and you'd ju hear him cursing himself. Just shoutin *loudly,* at himself."

Unlike most actors, Reeves admits th he reads reviews, or at least the begi nings of them, depending. He does not di pute a theory that his reviews tend to b for better or worse, extreme—that he is, essence, an A-or-F student. "My reviev are usually personal. Have you noticed That extremism that you're talking about— makes it a more personal kind of thing: loved it or I hated it. It's not just a revie It's a *personal* feeling. . . . Lately I've bee getting more B's." (Surprisingly, some o his best reviews have been for his Shak spearean work, most notably in Kennet Branagh's 1993 *Much Ado About Nothin* and as Hamlet onstage in Canada—a 199 performance Roger Lewis of London's *Su day Times* called "one of the top thre Hamlets I have seen, for a simple reaso He *is* Hamlet.")

As any critic will note, Reeves's caree has ebbed twice. The first time was i the early 1990s, after his promising, sta building performances in movies as varie as *River's Edge, Parenthood, Dangerous L aisons,* and, especially, *Bill & Ted's Exce lent Adventure,* that curiously popular tee comedy which briefly made air guita an acceptable form of public expressio Then, in 1994, he reluctantly starred in Ja De Bont's runaway hit, *Speed,* and becam the sort of celebrity whose tongue scra ings could be auctioned on eBay. Turnin down millions of dollars and the advice o virtually everyone, Reeves passed on *Spee 2,* reportedly accepting less money to wor with Al Pacino in *Devil's Advocate.* Hi mulish discretion evinced a measure o grace: *Speed 2,* which starred a visibl cranky Jason Patric, was a screaming disa ter. But then another ebb, which spanne

rly five years and included such critical- ınacclaimed train wrecks as *Johnny emonic, A Walk in the Clouds, Chain ıction,* and *Feeling Minnesota.*

Then along came *The Matrix,* Andy and ·ry Wachowski's mind-bending science- ion smash, and our protagonist's screen rma was revealed: he seems to excel in at might be termed Stoner Movies—that novies for (and sometimes by and about) sort of person who owns the spoken- rd poetry of Jim Morrison, possesses re than three novels by cult writer Philip Dick, and hides a giant bong beneath his tank. Think of it this way: *Saving Private in* is not a Stoner Movie. *The Thin Red e* is. Non-Stoner Movies want to tug your ırtstrings; Stoner Movies want to blow ır mind.

Could there possibly be a bigger, better, re quintessential Stoner Movie than *The ıtrix,* an uncommonly paranoid film ıut, as Reeves aptly explains, "the rela- ıship to existence—Why am I here? What going on?—the suspicion that what you're ng in your daily life is actually being en- eered by a team that masks the truth."

ose who can't fathom *The Matrix* are conciled," Reeves figures. "There's no re questioning. They don't have an exis- tial feeling of suspicion or discomfort t calibrates to life. There are no questions them."

Here it should be noted that Reeves him- f has no strong feelings about the Stoner ovie Theory. He neither accepts nor re- ts it. He's cool either way. But at one int he seems subliminally to tip his hand en asked whether *The Matrix* was in or t of the Hollywood mainstream. "It was ht on the line," he says, nodding playful- "Depended on how you looked at it— w much pot you smoked."

When Reeves was a child, his pet phrase was "How come?" Born to an eccen- c British costume designer (who some- nes wore a peach-dyed crew cut) and a ublesome Hawaiian-Chinese father (who iled on the family when Keanu was two), eves unquestionably experienced a kind reality-challenged youth. For starters, he s born in formerly exotic Beirut. Several ars after his father bolted, his mother oved to Canada, where Reeves spent his rmative years playing hockey and failing sses. He was diagnosed with dyslexia—a rning disorder he eventually overcame. s mother married again. Then divorced ain. She earned a living as a seamstress, aking costumes for musicians such as olly Parton and Emmylou Harris. When eves was young, the ghoulish rocker Alice ooper stayed at their place while recording s seminal stoner album, *Welcome to My ghtmare.*

"My aesthetic is heavily influenced by my mother," Reeves says, proudly noting that she moved from London to Paris when she was 14. He smiles, contemplating their shared sensibility. "It's exotic, and it gets more exotic from there." Example: Although Reeves usually favors T-shirts and jeans, he has a taste for expensive clothes. The expertly tailored coat he's wearing tonight—part of an anti-style he jokingly describes as "bohemian scarf"—was bought in Australia, and it did not come cheap. "I feel like I got my father's blood," Reeves says, contemplating a parent he didn't really know or fathom—perhaps because his father ended up in prison after being caught with heroin and cocaine. (In fact, Reeves has rarely, if ever, discussed him publicly. He does not like talking about his family, which also includes two sisters.) Reeves stares into his drink. "Have you ever had that feeling? That there's something *of* you? That you're a part of?" He adds, "I would say my father—I didn't know him, but I inherited his blood. [He] was more emotional, tempestuous, willful . . . "

Romantic?

Reeves pauses. "Tragic," he says finally.

Tragic? You?

"No. Of course not. But, I mean, you know, in a kind of . . . "

He thinks better of it, then pats his pockets in a way which suggests that he'd enjoy a cigarette right now.

Minutes later, Marlboro in hand, Reeves is on to a subject that only he could consider infinitely more comfortable: drugs. This makes him a singular creature in Hollywood, where the only thing more common than drug use is the denial of it. When was the last time you heard an A-list movie star say something like this about drugs: "I've had wonderful experiences. I mean *really* wonderful. In teaching. Personal epiphanies. About life. About a different perspective—help with different perspectives that you have. You know what I mean? Relationships to nature. Relationships with the self. With other people. With events."

Unfortunately, this sort of thing got Reeves in trouble back in the early 1990s, when his reputation began to precede him. He hadn't *played* a deeply stoned young man named Ted, went the theory. He *was* Ted. In interviews, Reeves said things like "Sometimes when I'm interviewed I'm not ready to do that. So you say . . . excellent! And you know what, man? It's O.K." Reeves's Jeff Spicoli–ish persona, his conspicuous dudeness, rankled.

"When we were much younger, we did a lot of drugs," says Richman. "Everyone did. Ecstasy and mushrooms—some crazy stuff. Keanu always had a big bag of pot."

"There was a certain half a year where I had a drug reputation," Reeves says, adding ruefully, "It's one of the rites of passage." Asked whether that reputation (which, it seems, extended much longer) was deserved, he replies, "Well, to a certain extent. I had to work in order to kind of dispel that. So I did some things that I wouldn't have normally done if I didn't have to, like a Japanese commercial to pay the rent or a video with Paula Abdul."

Reeves isn't the least bit self-conscious about this subject. He's self-conscious about few things, period, and so utterly lacking in neurosis that it's unnerving, frankly. As he's grown older, he's dialed back the partying considerably. But he still exudes a certain party-boy ethos—which, by the way, does not suggest stupidity; in fact, the most interesting thing about Reeves is that, despite his conspicuous dudeness, he's far more intellectually curious than most movie stars, with their endless public readings of Pablo Neruda and trips to Indian ashrams. Reeves, by contrast, talks persuasively about Philip K. Dick—specifically, his 1964 novel *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch,* which is about alternate realities—and Mark Epstein's 1995 *Thoughts Without a Thinker,* which is about psychotherapy and Buddhism, one of Reeves's favorite subjects. (He played Siddhartha in Bernardo Bertolucci's brilliant 1993 mistake, *Little Buddha.*)

"It's something that touches me," he says a bit cautiously. "But I haven't taken refuge in the dharma."

"Which means what?" he's asked.

"That's your initiation into the dharma. That's a ceremony."

"So you're interested in it, but not of it."

"Right. Right."

Here one begins to worry that Reeves is going to start levitating or something. Here one says, "Not to get too heavy on you . . . "

"Oh, it's O.K.," says Reeves, playfully signaling the waitress for another cocktail. "I'm eating light."

Reeves is asked to list his vices.

"Vices," he says, bemused.

"Things that you really try to "

He lifts his hand as if to say that he knows what the word *means;* it just doesn't have any particular relevance to his life.

"Something you really can't do without?" he offers.

"Something you consider *wrong.* A bad habit."

"That I consider *wrong?*"

"Yeah."

He shrugs. "I don't have one," he says flatly.

"Or maybe you're just not judgmental toward yourself."

Keanu Reeves

"Perhaps. Probably." Shrug. "But I don't have one."

"There's nothing?" he's asked, with a nod toward his third Marlboro.

Reeves stares at his cigarette. "I don't consider smoking a vice."

His eyes are twinkling. Time passes.

"So. No vices?"

He smiles again. "Or I just don't relate to them as vices."

It's this sort of thing—this mix of calm and aloofness, confidence and coyness—which both attracts and confounds those around Reeves. "He's such a private person—very intelligent, very private—that sometimes he becomes almost inarticulate," says Pat O'Connor, who directed Reeves in the romantic drama *Sweet November*, due out this month and co-starring Charlize Theron as a dying woman who romances and then discards a new man every month. "He has no bullshit about him. If that's Zen-like, I don't know. He has a calm exterior and a turbulent interior. He's learned through his own experience, and his own sense of what he's about, to curb and channel his energies in the direction of the performance. He's quiet. Sometimes playful. More often, intense."

Lately, Reeves has experienced a number of personal travails, none greater than that his sister Kim, one of the dearest people in his life, has been fighting cancer. For a time, Reeves lived in a bedroom in her Los Angeles home. (In fact, Reeves has spent years living out of hotel rooms, and he's currently renting a relatively simple Santa Monica apartment, which he decorated in one day, using furniture rented from a friend. "It's everyone's dream to have very few possessions," Mailhouse explains. "Keanu has the ability to move around." Which he does via some of his few big-ticket toys: a shiny black Porsche and several motorcycles.)

"I've always wondered how he processes the things that he has to process," says Richman. Evidently, Reeves rarely approaches friends about his personal issues. Richman describes him as "the perfect paradox of loving people and loving being alone [and] intense quietness and overt exclamation."

"He's more of a loner than anything else," says O'Connor, a gentle Irishman with a splendid brogue. "But he's not a loner in that sort of up-your-arse sort of way.... There's an anger and there's a pain in Keanu, as there is in many actors. And his life has been complicated. However enigmatic he is about it, the fact is that his own history is present in his own body and his own emotions." Told that Reeves makes vague allusions to his anger, O'Connor adds, "That's proof that he's very aware of it. He just chooses not to talk about it."

Case in point: when Reeves is asked how his ill sister is doing, he stiffens noticeably and almost whispers, "Hanging in there." When he's asked again days later, on grounds that People Want to Know, he pauses for several miserably long seconds. "Well," he says finally, through gritted teeth, "when you talk to them you can just say you didn't get an answer."

Even though Reeves still goes out plenty, often until the wee hours, he doesn't g out much in Hollywood. He tends to han around with guys he's known for years. H bandmates, Richman, Alex Winter, his co star in *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure*.

Also, since only about a million readers are wondering, he has not been muc involved in serious romances lately. "Unfo tunately, at the moment, I'm not," he say "But, you know, I'm looking. I haven't bee in a relationship for like five years now. mean, I've gone out and stuff, but I haven been in a relationship."

Then he adds, "It was so hard the las time. Literally it was just in the last coupl of years where I was even open to the ide of being in another relationship.... It wa just like, 'Agggh! God, forget all that, ma Let's be friends.'"

"Are you protective because you don want someone going out with you only be cause you're a movie star?" he's asked.

He shakes his head and, laughing loudly says, "Well, for one night ... "

He's kidding. Sort of. He does that. H plays the angles. He bobs and weaves. A one point, while discussing the sheer joy o picking up a bass and joining a rock band he stares you in the eye and says, "It's good clean fun. You should try it."

"I'm too old," he's told.

"Come on, man. Come on."

"Don't see it happening. But I appreci ate your enthusiasm."

He slumps in his seat and gives you a look. "You smoke?" he asks.

"No."

"No guitars, no cigarettes," he says, smi ing. "You'll learn." □

Lara Flynn Boyle

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 142 a courtside seat at a Laker game or a bedside seat in Jack Nicholson's boudoir?"

"Well, basketball games aren't every day, and they're not every season. What's exciting is sitting there with him in each place.... But I'm really a Bulls fan. The Lakers are playing the Bulls this Sunday, in fact, and I'm quite happy that I'm not going to be able to make it," she says, leaving unsaid that the reason is she's going with Nicholson to the lavish nuptials of Michael Douglas and Catherine Zeta-Jones at the Plaza Hotel in New York. "I don't think I could handle that game," she continues. "The Lakers are going to clobber them. But I'd be in red and black right there, baby," she insists, referring to the Bulls' team colors, "rooting them on all the way."

"Jack wouldn't reach over and bitch-slap you?"

Boyle raises her Elizabeth Taylor eyebrows imperiously.

"You can be quite a handful," I say. "He never gets mad at you?"

"Never," she insists a bit too dramatically. "Never. Never. Never."

Did he perhaps get a little mad when he read in the tabloids that Boyle was the woman credited with breaking up Harrison Ford's marriage? Was that the way she won him back?

"You know, I'm really sorry about all that," she says. "That was so blown out of proportion. I sat down in a booth with Harrison Ford at a party and talked to him for five minutes." She pauses and considers the bare bones of that statement. "Well, maybe *six*," she says, smiling. "It's strange in this town, where everyone has rumors spread about them. Untruths have been written about all of us. Everyone knows from experience that that happens. But the minute it happens t someone else, they believe it. People reall think that I'm a home wrecker. That I'm difficult. That I'm crazy. That's the part o fame that's like *The Wizard of Oz* on acid.

Which would she prefer to be known as a star or a starfucker?

"Both!" she says, laughing. "Howeve there are not too many stars I'd want t fuck."

"You've already done it with the one you want to?"

"*Yeah.* Yeah. Yeah. Yeah," she says, th Chief being several steps up in the Holly wood ecosystem from her former boy friends, Kyle MacLachlan and Richard Dean Anderson. (There were also report that she was dating David Spade at the be ginning of her affair with Nicholson, bu she says that they never were "boyfriend and girlfriend.")

Boyle checks out her makeup in a mi

held up to her, and is told that she real- s an Elizabeth Taylor "Mini-Me" this af- noon. "I *looove* Elizabeth Taylor. Talk ut a woman who has searched for years neet her match. She's a real dame. Fan- ic. I met her at the Barbra Streisand con- t. I'd seen her, actually, on New Year's at the White House, but I didn't talk to ." she says, recalling the millennium par- she attended with Nicholson. "I was so awe. She was sitting there with Sophia ren. I stole a few items from the White use. They had a toothbrush holder that d, like, 20 brushes, that had THE WHITE USE written on it. I took all the brushes out. Cleaned out my evening bag. Put it in. And there was a little plastic plaque on a telephone that said PRIVATE LINE next to a red button. I took that."

After brunch, as we wait for her car under the porte cochère of the Beverly Hills Hotel, I ask her to chart her career in Hollywood by the kinds of vehicles she's driven since arriving here a decade ago. "First car I had was a '57 Chevy. Mint condition. Flamingo pink and bullet gray. Then I got a BMW. The small one. Then I got the big one. Then I got my Mercedes. A 5-something. The biggest one. I hated driving that Chevy. You couldn't go anywhere without everyone looking at you. Now I'm in the most typical car in L.A. Got my tinted windows. But you know what? I hate driving. The thing that sold me on this car," she says as the parking attendant hands over her keys, "is that the front seat can go really far up so I can see over the steering wheel."

Lighting yet another cigarette, she climbs in and grabs that wheel. Behind the tinted front-door window there is a blur of movement as she re-adjusts the seat from where the attendant has repositioned it, pushing—as she always does—just the right buttons to move herself forward. □

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aula Yates

NTINUED FROM PAGE 127 over the years en virtually immune to press criticism. ne of the people interviewed for this story nt to the "Saint Bob" factor. Others mut- about his "power in the media." None them would speak about Geldof on the ord. One former associate puts it bluntly: ave a look at Bob and Paula's wedding otograph"—the wedding guests included vid Bowie, Paul McCartney, and Sting— id see who you'd upset if you upset Bob. ath if you upset Bob."

Yates and Geldof provided well for the three children they had together, all ls, whom they blessed with the names Fifi xibelle (born in 1983), Peaches (born in 89), and Pixie (born in 1990). When *The be* ended its long run (by British TV stan- rds) in 1987, having been replaced by sher formats, Yates focused on raising her nily in their Chelsea home while produc- books and television programs about ild rearing. Amusing as her descriptions "the myriad hues of acid trip bowel mo- ns" were, Yates's disparaging remarks out working mothers and strident theo- s on breast-feeding (she suckled Pixie for ee years) managed to alienate many.

In her private life during this period, tes played the archest of conservative thers, a woman who would make, with a toss of her head, the most capricious neralizations about what she considered rrect behavior. Once she told a bemused end that any woman who owned a pair pajamas cared nothing about her mar- ge. "Some of the things that she came up th as precepts had to do with construct- g a set of rules by which she would lead r own life, however chaotic it appeared m the outside," says the friend.

Indeed, by most accounts the Geldof- tes household appeared to run smoothly, spite the husband's dominating person- ality—on one occasion Geldof reportedly interrupted Yates while she was entertaining and ordered her to do housework—and despite rumored affairs on both sides. Whatever extracurricular activity occurred, say friends, Yates's oft stated desire to maintain the perfect family remained undimmed and central to her identity. Speaking once of their festive holiday arrangements, she said, "We follow all the traditions and try to have the kind of old-fashioned Christmas I dreamed of as a child."

In September 1992, Planet 24 launched *The Big Breakfast* on Channel 4. Co-hosted by Chris Evans, a highly caffeinated former kissogram delivery boy, the much-trumpeted program brought youth-TV brashness to Britain's cornflake demographic—the *Today* show as reconceived by MTV and Howard Stern. *The Big Breakfast,* still running, is a hyperthyroid mishmash, broadcast live from a house in London's post-industrial Docklands, with all the entrails of television production deliberately visible. The original newsreader sat before a garish backdrop and recited his copy while, overhead, mercilessly punning captions hammered home the message of fun-fun-fun. In the early days, Sir Bob himself occasionally interviewed high-profile personalities such as Nelson Mandela and Australian prime minister Paul Keating for the show; Geldof also hired his wife, back on TV as a regular after five years of light employment, to grill the frothier sorts of celebrities.

After Yates got off to an uneven start, Suzi Aplin was hired to produce her segments, and, like most people, she found that there was more to Paula than met the eye. "She was this chameleon figure," says Aplin. "She was a fantastic mum when she wanted to be and she has a brilliant brain that no one gave her credit for." And there was the other thing: "She would flirt with men, flirt with women," says Aplin. "Even people who didn't want to open up very much, she could get the best secrets out of them. She was even great with someone like John Malkovich, who is notoriously bright—she completely matched him."

Yates's interviews were conducted on a bed, the better for her to flirt with her subjects. On the morning of October 31, 1994, nearly a year after her Christmas Day discussion about leaving Geldof, she got horizontal with Michael Hutchence of the band INXS. In the course of some shamelessly lascivious bantering their legs became intertwined for all to see on live TV. Viewers knew that this encounter was intimate even by Paula Yates's standards, and there was history here: on *The Tube* in early 1986, Yates had come on to the then bashful Australian singer, known for such modest hits as "Listen Like Thieves" and "Original Sin" —and met him afterward for one chaste, chaperoned date. Yates subsequently commemorated her crush on Hutchence by affixing his picture to the refrigerator in the family home alongside those of her other rock-star crushes. She would dutifully put up a fresh image of Hutchence every time Bob Geldof scrawled CUNT across his face.

"I remember when Paula ran to tell me that she was having an affair," says Jo Fairley. "And I said, 'Oh, my God, who is it?' And she said, 'It's Love Dog . . . '"

Love Dog was their name for Hutchence. Yates's schoolgirlish crush had, in the wake of Hutchence's *Big Breakfast* appearance, come to fruition. The man was a movie director's idea of a rock star. He had the poetic curls and the long leather-clad legs, and he struck all the correct iconic poses for the camera. Yet, according to Fairley, her friend's attraction to the rangy INXS vocalist was not quite the groupie infatuation one might have imagined. "She loved the fact that he was so incredibly well mannered and such a gentleman," says Fairley. "He was the sort of person who would open the door for you."

For all his atavistic stage work, the six-foot Hutchence was no rawboned Aussie,

Paula Yates

but rather a soft-spoken (and slightly lisping) sort who was genial to a fault. Hutchence had spent most of his first 12 years in colonial Hong Kong, where his father worked for a trading company, and the family was wrapped in what the son later called a "cocoon of gentility," replete with servants. He had spent most of his adult life in another sort of cocoon, that of a successful touring rock band, with all the lifestyle experimentation that implies. In his mid-30s when he took up with Yates, Hutchence not only accepted but embraced the fact that she was a mother of three. "To somebody who's on the road living every night in a different hotel room, the thought of a base with his family is exotic," says Fairley, who also notes that Yates's and Hutchence's upbringings were marked by certain similarities: "They had these raving-mad families. They used to compare notes about their mothers." Both were therefore determined to foster a perfect family environment together.

After Hutchence and Yates's dalliance was made public in February 1995 (some say she tipped the press off to an early hotel tryst), she and Bob Geldof finally split. A joint press release stated that "they are each other's best friend."

Few on the outside could understand why Hutchence and Yates were together in the first place. Yates was married to Saint Bob; Hutchence was seeing the Danish supermodel Helena Christensen. Many people feel that it was the "trading down" aspect of the relationship that turned the press against Paula Yates—and that the idea of a "jumped-up pushy little blonde" who was still sexually brazen well into her 30s was distasteful to the men who run Britain's newspapers. Hutchence, the *Daily Mail* wrote, must be "bored with beauty." The *Daily Mirror,* meanwhile, informed the world that Yates's mother "backs Bob."

As the initial wave of attention passed, Hutchence repaired to his villa in the South of France, near the town of Grasse. He was divorcing himself from INXS and all its rock-band trappings, writing songs for his first solo album with producer Andy Gill (a former member of the cult band Gang of Four known more recently for his work with the Red Hot Chili Peppers).

The Hutchence solo project moved back to London, where, in a strange domestic arrangement, Hutchence and Yates took over her and Geldof's marital home on Redburn Street in Chelsea, while Geldof set up housekeeping at Hutchence's residence nearby. Hutchence and Yates were by now attracting a level of attention and opprobrium that he, as an Australian, never quite managed to comprehend. Every grocery run was attended by paparazzi; the *Daily Mirror* called him a "rabid dingo." Just as he was trying to re-define himself as an artist, Hutchence was stuck with a new form of celebrity. "He came to loathe England with a passion," says Catherine Mayer, Andy Gill's journalist wife, who became close to Yates. Since Yates excommunicated any acquaintance who maintained contact with Geldof, the new couple's social circle shrank to just a few close friends, principally Gill, Mayer, Fairley, and Belinda Brewin, a fellow mother whom Yates met when their daughters were playing together.

For all his press-release blandishments, Bob Geldof was likely angry about being cuckolded in so public a fashion, and seeing the woman he'd loved for 17 years gushing about her new rock-star boyfriend to all and sundry. Moreover, says a former friend, "for the first time in his life he had a situation he wasn't in control of, and wasn't able to thump the table and *get* in control of. He couldn't believe it. Here was the man who had talked heads of state into doing what he wanted, and this was one situation that mattered most to him in the world and he couldn't change it."

While Geldof appeared to keep his own counsel, he was, according to sources, wielding his influence offstage, undermining Yates and Hutchence by giving off-the-record briefings to journalists.

The press couldn't get enough of the whole messy business. Although INXS had never been outrageously popular in Britain, when one factored Hutchence's wild-man image into the Yates-Geldof split, it made for perfect, ongoing tabloid soap opera that could be spun out as a modern-day morality tale. In this new Cruel Britannia, mother of three Paula Yates was but a cipher to be mocked in a deliberate and sustained manner. British *GQ* ran a Helena Christensen cover with the question "Would *you* dump this for Paula Yates?" *Observer* columnist Barbara Ellen mocked Yates's new, widely reported breast implants and called her a "born loser." The papers, which had re-styled themselves more or less in the manner of *The Word* and *The Big Breakfast,* worked themselves into an almost *L.A. Confidential* state of pursed-lipped disapproval—which hardly befitted writers and editors who were otherwise celebrating the lurid excesses, often openly drug-fueled, of the nation's youth culture.

Yates's *Big Breakfast* contract was not renewed by her estranged husband's production company; she was replaced on the show in June 1995 by a drag artist (ratings fell 50 percent). Meanwhile, Yates told friends that Princess Diana had thanked her personally for occupying the front pages.

In October 1995, less than a year after sh took up with Hutchence, Yates agreed t appear on the satirical quiz show *Have Got News for You.* She was clearly below p on set, smiling absently as the show's clev regulars indulged in their customary sworc manship. But Yates was woken up abrup ly when Ian Hislop, editor of *Private Ey* turned on her with a sulfurous ferocity th beggared belief. Hislop stopped the show belabor Yates about Hutchence's assault c a photographer, her breast job, and her no sisterly treatment of Helena Christense General Pinochet, the former Chilean di tator, could hardly have been treated mo harshly. Recoiling from this ambush, Yat called Hislop "sperm of the Devil."

Whereas this kind of media blood spo greatly upset Hutchence, Yates managed f a time to retain a certain sangfroid abo the situation, perhaps to the point of rec lessness. One European magazine, says B linda Brewin, printed a paparazzo shot c Yates giving Hutchence oral sex on the ro of a building. Yates, Brewin recalls, joke about putting a giant enlargement of th blow-job photo in the reception area c some notional future company.

For all her occasional frivolity under pre sure, Yates still had to deal with Bob Ge dof, the dark eminence. The formidable e ergy that Geldof had used to whip Ban Aid into existence was now, say some fam ly friends, turned toward making Yates's li difficult. "Vengeful," she called him on Au tralia's *60 Minutes.* As Belinda Brewin pu it, "Anyone who can bully a nation can bu ly a household."

By the accounts of many people wh know Geldof, the man's default verbal se ting seems to be shouting. And anyone wh was around Yates after she split with Ge dof was apt to catch a blast of his wrat When Brewin began to help out with Yates business affairs around 1997, she came int closer contact with Geldof and found tha he could be belligerent over the smallest is sues, with Yates's lack of punctuality a pa ticular favorite. "I told him, 'Don't fuckin shout at me,'" Brewin says of one confron tation. "Half an hour later he called m back to apologize."

Central to the war of attrition Geldo visited upon Yates immediately afte their breakup was the legal case over cus tody of the couple's three daughters, a con test which drained both her morale an her finances. On more than one occasio Yates lost custody of the children to Gel dof, who nonetheless granted her access t them on alternate weeks and half of thei school holidays.

Geldof remained concerned about th use of drugs in the Yates-Hutchence house hold, and his fears were not based solel

Hutchence's notorious frankness about
aste for proscribed substances, includ-
heroin, which he snorted. According to
producer Geoff Wonfor, Yates once
him that Geldof had gotten her off of
ss A drugs ("I think it was Charlie,"
cocaine) when she was 17. Either way,
widely acknowledged that Yates re-
ned drug-free throughout her years
Geldof. Yet shortly after Yates met
chence she was calling in to *The Big*
kfast to explain that they had been in-
ed in some bacchanalian excess the
t before and that she wouldn't make it
e show.

One associate of Yates's recalls Geldof's
nay when he saw her and Hutchence
oking and snorting heroin in front of
nds. "If Paula had any ballast at all, it
Bob's rather dreadful behavior to her,"
the associate. "That was almost the
ast that kept her grounded." The changes
Yates were, to her friends, both obvious
easily explained. "When
was with Michael I
k she became what he
nted her to be because
adored him," says Suzi
in. "She changed her fig-
and she led more of a
k-star lifestyle."

till, whatever illicit activi-
ties went on within Yates
l Hutchence's relationship,
children did not appear
be gravely affected. "You'd
into their house and it was
fucking Mary Poppins,"
s Belinda Brewin. "There'd
baking, there'd be gluing,
re'd be sticking. My kids
ought it was heaven to go to that
use." According to Brewin, Hutchence
uld rise every morning at seven o'clock
ferry Yates's children to school. (She
n't drive.)

"There are millions of people out there
o drink 17 too many gin-and-tonics,"
ewin continues, defending her friends.
hey still get up with a hangover and they
ve their kids to school. They still keep a
mblance of a normal lifestyle."

A "semblance of a normal lifestyle" fi-
lly became impossible for Yates and
tchence in late 1996, when they were
a trip to Australia with their newborn
ughter, Tiger. The police were called to
couple's residence on Redburn Street,
house formerly occupied by Yates and
ldof, where a quantity of opium was said
have been found in a tube of Smarties
e British equivalent of M&Ms) that, ac-
rding to reports, had been placed inside
shoebox also containing Polaroids of
couple having sex. Yates and Hutchence
were pursued by the press as never before.

And yet it is hardly clear that the opium belonged to the couple. Among those who had access to the house while its primary residents were away were longtime family nanny Anita Debney; Debney's brother and at least one member of his rock band; and Gerry Agar, a flaky friend of Yates's who had briefly helped her with P.R. chores. (So desperate was the press for material about Yates and Hutchence that, in August 1996, Agar had actually made the cover of *The Sunday Telegraph Magazine*.) Yates and Hutchence were, says Andy Gill, "victims of their own hospitality"; others point to judgment that was affected by their use of Prozac, the antidepressant.

Whatever the reasons for conditions at Redburn Street, a lengthy *Sunday Times Magazine* article found a disturbing number of inconsistencies surrounding the opium bust. The shoebox holding the drugs and photos was said to have been found under Yates and Hutchence's bed—yet Brewin, who had painted the couple's bedroom floor, says that their bed was a futon resting on a frame with just a couple of inches between it and the floor. As far as the photographs went, Yates had once shown them to Brewin on a lark, and Brewin says they were kept "inside a bag, inside a big chest of drawers in the bedroom, hidden below about 18 layers of clothing."



BED TV
Yates demonstrates her winning interview technique with actor Christopher Lambert on *The Big Breakfast*, November 1994. In America, of course, famous TV journalists get into bed with their subjects only metaphorically.

With suspicions of conspiracy rampant, Bob Geldof denied any involvement, insisting that he had never visited the Redburn Street house while its occupants were away; yet a box of Geldof's prescription drugs was later found at the scene, dated two days before the police raid. Meanwhile, the Yates-Hutchence sex Polaroids were posted on the Internet.

Although there was no prosecution in the opium matter, the damage was done, publicly and privately. Both Hutchence and Yates began to rely heavily on prescription drugs such as Prozac, Valium, and Rohypnol (a form of sleeping pill also notorious as a date-rape drug), alongside whatever recreational substances they may have shared. Embattled and addled, they were in no shape to defend themselves, although Yates did take successful legal action last year against *The Mail on Sunday* for suggesting in 1999 that she had become pregnant to trap Hutchence in a long-term relationship. (The truth was that the couple had attended a fertility clinic.) *The Mail on Sunday* was ordered to pay a substantial settlement plus legal costs and issue an apology. But once again the damage had been done.

In November 1997, Michael Hutchence was back in Australia, recovering from INXS's world tour and awaiting a three-month visit from Paula Yates and her girls. Bob Geldof had, Hutchence and Yates believed, agreed to the trip, but then Geldof elected to contest his daughters' visit in court, and the case was postponed until the week before Christmas. The trip was off.

In the early-morning hours of November 22, in his room at Sydney's Carlton Hotel, a heavily intoxicated Hutchence heard news of the canceled vacation from Yates and told her that he was going to contact Geldof and beg him to let the family travel. At 5:30 A.M., Hutchence called up Geldof in England and railed against him incoherently. Later that morning Hutchence was found dead in his room, hanging by the neck from a leather belt attached to the back of the door.

Paula Yates took a Qantas flight to Australia the next day, accompanied by Gill and Brewin. The funeral party was surrounded in the first-class cabin by newspaper reporters who gleefully detailed the new widow's drunken behavior and mocked the fact that she was traveling under the name "Lady Geldof," though Yates had not bought her own ticket; the name on it was copied directly from her passport by a functionary.

Michael Hutchence's funeral took place at St. Andrew's Anglican Cathedral in Sydney on November 27, 1997. When Paula Yates approached the singer's mother, Patricia Glassop, at the church, the older wom-

Paula Yates

an told her, "You killed my son." According to Hutchence's father, Kell, after the cremation Glassop punched him in the face, knocking out bridgework from four of his front teeth.

The inquest into Michael Hutchence's death found that the singer had died with alcohol, Prozac, and cocaine in his bloodstream—and that his death was a suicide. This verdict Paula Yates could never live with. She claimed there was little evidence to suggest that he'd taken his own life, and felt sure he had died during a bout of autoerotic asphyxiation, a practice that involves choking oneself during masturbation to heighten orgasm. "I think he'd tried everything else," Yates told Australia's *60 Minutes.* Hutchence always said that suicide was "the most cowardly act," she insisted, and besides, he was too devoted to his daughter to ever leave her.

Yates's friends describe her as having been "mad with grief" after Hutchence's death. Says one acquaintance, "She blamed herself for not protecting him" from the onslaught of the media. When Yates returned from the funeral, her friends packed her off to the Priory, a South London rehab center favored by British celebrities. It was not that Yates had drug or alcohol addictions, says Jo Fairley, but that she was simply unable to cope with the bereavement. "She was taking fistfuls of Valium," according to Fairley, who expresses disappointment at the level of personal attention Yates received at the Priory. Belinda Brewin recalls being shocked that Yates had managed to smuggle booze into her room; a source close to the clinic cites this as a reason why Yates was ultimately referred to Clouds Clinic, a more isolated facility in Wiltshire, outside London. One newspaper, Yates told friends, mistakenly sent her a copy of her own obituary. These are customarily written well before a celebrity's death, though rarely for someone still in her 30s. This obit was glibly titled "Suicide Blonde" after an INXS hit.

The public humiliation of Paula Yates was not quite complete. In May 1997, Hughie Green, a comically unctuous talent-show host of the 60s and 70s, passed away. One of his friends chose this moment to declare that Green, not Jess Yates, was Paula's true father. As a prelude to suing the *News of the World,* which printed this allegation, and with her mother's assurance that the story was false, Yates undertook DNA comparisons with Hughie Green's two children. The results showed that all three were, in fact, related—a revelation that pitched Yates into yet one more headline-making tailspin. "She nearly had a heart attack," says Belinda Brewin.

Yates made return visits to the Priory and to Clouds, where she entered an ill-advised romantic coupling with a recovering heroin addict. This character, a jobless 26-year-old named Kingsley O'Keke, immediately sold his story to the tabloids, describing the couple's sexual episodes and detailing how Yates fed her drug and drink habits with messenger deliveries of cash. These tawdry tales lowered Yates's stock even further, proving her judgment to be seriously awry, and suggesting that she may not have been doing all she could to protect herself from adverse media attention.

Since elements of Michael Hutchence's estate were at this point being contested by the singer's mother and half-sister, and Yates was not fit to work, she was flirting with penury. "She went from being someone who could walk into Dolce & Gabbana and Michael would buy her 10 outfits to somebody who could only really window-shop at Dolce & Gabbana," says Jo Fairley. Yates's sole source of income, according to Fairley, was the payments she received for photo shoots in soft-serve celebrity magazines such as *OK!* and *Hello.* (For a while she even wrote a beauty column for the latter.) It wasn't the first time she had collaborated with the industry that was destroying her life: Yates had written a column for the *Sun* tabloid until the opium bust.

Amid the worst of her financial woes in the summer of 1999, Yates did a paid cover story for *Red* magazine, a general-interest monthly pitched at readers in their 30s. The photo session got under way only after prolonged cajoling by the magazine's editors. "Geldof had been asked not to call her that day," says *Red*'s then art director, Geoff Waring. When he did call, just after the shoot began, there was a prolonged and violent row about Yates's supposed failings as a mother. After she hung up, says Waring, "Paula was so shaken she could barely carry on."

Yates's every public appearance bolstered the impression of a faded and confused ingenue whom no one cared to flirt with anymore. Her descent was precipitated by drugs both legal and illicit, and by alcohol, which she preferred to consume in the form of dozens of vodka miniatures. According to those who knew her, Yates had been a teetotaler until her mid-30s. "She was a hopeless drinker," says Catherine Mayer, who recalls Yates holding her nose when she swallowed a glass of wine at a family Christmas with Hutchence in 1996. "She immediately had to go and lie down. The only thing she could ever drink was stupid sweet drinks."

One of those stupid sweet drinks nearly undid Paula Yates in September 1997. Belinda Brewin was called to Yates's house St. Luke's Mews, near Portobello Road, the wake of her friend's near death fro having washed down a large dose of Va um with Malibu rum and the sticky lique Baileys Irish Cream. "She just went o and bought the two prettiest bottles," sa Brewin, who, when she arrived at the scer was horrified to see that her friend's lips ha turned blue. On another occasion, Brew called Yates to tell her she'd be coming visit in five minutes. When Brewin arrive Yates's neck was red and her eyes bloo shot—she'd apparently tried to hang hers with a luggage strap.

At best these reckless gestures could b regarded as pleas for help; the less charit ble saw them as attention-getting ploys fro a woman locked in a co-dependent rel tionship with the media.

Even in this dark hour Yates still had h wits about her. According to Brewin, Be Geldof appeared at Yates's house after th Valium incident and voiced his exasperatio with his former wife. "He said, 'If I had yo talent I'd write another book—but I have n talent for fiction,'" Brewin recalls. "And sh goes, 'Well, I don't know about a book, b I've read your fucking affidavits.'"

It was not until the summer of 2000 th Paula Yates began to pick herself up fro the serial tragedies that had warped her li beyond recognition. In June, she went dow to spend a couple of months at her ne £150,000 house in Hastings, a sleepy, eas going south-coast town. (The new hous was bought with the proceeds from her *Mo on Sunday* libel settlement; she never did r ceive a bequest from Hutchence's estate.)

In Hastings, Yates managed to spend h summer in relative anonymity, regain h equilibrium, and acquire some perspectiv on the cottage industry that she had b come. Fairley recalls Yates's saying at th time, "Why should everybody else be mak ing money out of me when I'm not makin any for myself?"

Yates's last remunerative engagement ha been the sloppy, low-budget *Evening wi Jerry Springer* she hosted on UK Livin Channel, a small cable channel, in Marc 1999. This was a low-end take on an estab lished British TV format in which a celebri is interviewed by another celebrity before a invited celebrity audience. A crowd consis ing of such minor-league luminaries as th pop band All Saints, ex-boxer Frank Brun and socialite Tara Palmer-Tomkinson looke on as Yates stumbled over her questio while making impenetrable asides and per odically sniffling. (She had a cold.) Howeve expected it may have been that *An Evenin with Jerry Springer* would be a shoddy deb cle, for Yates it represented just one mo freak show, and a failed comeback.

Certainly, as fodder for male fantasy she long ago been overtaken by the new alion of blonde presenters, such as inda Messenger, Donna Air, and Denise Outen, who occupy the covers of those ish magazines favored by young male ders. How could a middle-aged ex- senter compete with these dewy hand- dens of the new Britain, who were only willing to shed their underlinens to the le winds' slightest gust?

According to Fairley, Yates was deter- ed last fall to jump-start her ailing ca- : She had been detoxing, eating broc- for lunch, and drinking organic juice ause she wanted to lose weight. On ursday, September 14 of last year, Fair- took Yates to a successful meeting with la Wilson, an agent whom rley thought capable of re- aching Yates. Wilson signed es immediately, and asked for w days to formulate a strategy. Giddy with fresh possibility, es and Fairley had lunch at Groucho Club, a members- y watering hole for London's dia rabble. The pair were nding in the ladies' room en in walked none other n Courtney Love, rock's st famous widow after Yoko o. According to Fairley, Love l Yates, "Oh my God, you n't know me, but I wrote to six months ago—did you my letter?!" Yates had re- ved no missive. "So then," rley recalls, "Courtney said, ook, what I said in my letter s that you have to get back work, you have to get a real- good agent, and you have to the work.... You have to be creative be- use that was what saved me.'"

As a onetime U.K. resident and an un- ting rock obsessive, Courtney Love—who clined to comment for this article—was parently an admirer of Yates's *Tube* days. e timing and nature of Love's comments re uncanny. "We were laughing all the way me," says Fairley.

That Saturday, Yates visited Fairley at me. "[Paula] said, 'Oh, my new best friend ng.' And I said, 'Who?' And she said, ourtney.'" The two blonde rock 'n' roll sur- ors planned to meet the following Mon- y evening.

"[Courtney] rang up and said, 'Let's ng,'" Yates had told Fairley. "And I had to —the phraseology was a little tactless ... "

During this same conversation, Paula Yates told Fairley that she had run into harlotte Korshak, a 21-year-old former roin addict whom she had met in rehab. When Yates spoke of a nighttime rendezvous with Korshak, Fairley was concerned that her friend might be vulnerable at this early stage of her recovery; Korshak was, Fairley says, part of the "netherworld of [Paula's] social circle ... this kind of underworld side of her life."

When Belinda Brewin dropped in at Yates's house to pick up her six-year-old daughter, Indiana, just after six o'clock that Saturday, it became clear that Fairley's concerns had been justified. Brewin was certain Yates had taken heroin for the first time in 18 months.

"I know Paula very well," says Brewin. "I know if she'd had a vodka ... I know if she'd had a Valium. I know if she'd had a line of coke ... I know if she'd had an ecstasy ... I knew she'd taken smack. She knew I knew."



AT SEA

Yates on the beach in Hastings, England (where she had recently bought a home and spent a quiet summer), three weeks before her death last September. Her friends say she had turned her life around, but this would prove to be her final photo shoot.

As Yates apologized for her condition, Brewin bathed her, cleaned up her vomit, and walked her round the apartment. "When I left at 9:20, Paula was not in a great state," Brewin recalls. "But she would have survived till the next day." Brewin did not find out until the following morning—when her daughter told her—that Charlotte Korshak, Paula's former junkie friend, had been in the house all along.

On Sunday, September 17, Fairley called Paula Yates at eight A.M. to remind her to phone her daughter Pixie, who was at Bob Geldof's house with her two sisters on the occasion of her 10th birthday. (Yates had already wrapped the present, a tailor-made dress.) At Yates's home, Tiger, her now four-year-old daughter with Hutchence, picked up the phone and said her mother was asleep. Next call, same thing. Frustrated, Fairley went round to Yates's house and found her friend sprawled out on her bed. Fairley tried to rouse Yates, but almost instantly realized that she was dead.

Fairley ushered Tiger downstairs and called an ambulance. She did not give the name of the deceased, for fear of predatory newshounds who might be monitoring the airwaves. The body was carried out before the press got there.

The next day, when Fairley was at Paula Yates's house clearing up her friend's affairs, there was a delivery from Yates's old doctor at the Priory clinic: 25 capsules of Sonata, a sleeping pill.

Paula Yates was not, as was reported even as far afield as in the *New York Post*, buried in a mink bikini. But that was not for lack of trying. Just before Yates died, she had taken possession of a fur coat that had once belonged to Jo Fairley's mother, and vowed to have a bikini made of it. Fairley felt sure that Paula would have appreciated the black humor of being buried in such a surreal piece of swimwear, so she asked their friend Sebastian Conran, a designer (and the son of Lord Conran, the U.K. design deity), to make the garment. But cooler heads prevailed, and Yates was buried in one of her favorite outfits, an Empire-line dress with a Pucci-style pattern.

But the Paula Yates funeral, held in Kent, was not without a touch of the eccentric. At the end of the Church of England service, the public-address system played Yates's breathy version of Nancy Sinatra's "These Boots Were Made for Walking." As the funeral director's hired pallbearers raised the casket to their shoulders, they paused for a moment with the music; when Yates trilled the immortal line "Are you ready boots? Start walking!" the men bore the former starlet forward.

"It was," says Jo Fairley, "exactly how she would have wanted it."

It is impossible to say whether Yates would have wanted her funeral to take place at the church attached to her ex-husband's country residence, but it seems unlikely that she would have wanted the ceremony to pass without mention of her last great love, Michael Hutchence. But that is what happened. Hutchence's name was conspicuously absent from the service, which was heard by mourners such as actor Rupert Everett

Paula Yates

and musicians Bono, Nick Cave, and Annie Lennox—he was effectively written out of her life, presumably in deference to Yates's legendarily controlling ex-husband, who had organized the funeral.

Several of Paula Yates's friends say that they might have told reporters a darker story about Bob Geldof's relationship with Paula had she still been alive. But now what's the point? Geldof has taken custody of Heavenly Hiraani Tiger Lily Hutchence, keeping her with her three adoring half-sisters, now ages 17, 11, and 10. (Tiger is, by the account of one Yates friend, in good fettle and, like many girls her age, "thinks she is Britney Spears.") So the issue must be left alone.

It was to Bob Geldof that Belinda Brewin ran when she found out that *The Sun* had somehow acquired a copy of Yates's will. It surely says something about Geldof's power within the British media that he was, according to one source, able to go away, make a quick phone call, and tell her, "It's dealt with." The Yates will has never been published.

One thing that Paula Yates was not accused of was committing suicide, a judgment that was confirmed on November 9 by the report of Westminster coroner Dr. Paul Knapman. He declared that there was no alcohol in Paula Yates's system when she died, and that even though there was a £5 note in her bedroom bearing traces of cocaine, h body contained no traces of that dru Yates was, said Dr. Knapman, killed by amount of heroin that would not have kill a regular user. He ruled out suicide, calli her behavior "foolish and incautious." Th was something of a correction, Yates's frien felt, to the press reports that had charact ized her death as inevitable, the result what Fairley calls a supposed "lonely spi of despair. But in fact," Fairley continu "she was very firmly on the upward curve

"Of course everyone's going to say, 'See fucking told you so,'" Belinda Brewin sa "That's the tragedy. The thing that was s is that, whatever it was, she was just tryi to have fun." □

Moss Hart

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 138 to end any movie career, and did.

She kept going. During the war she sang "The Star-Spangled Banner" in Stateside camp shows and launched a battleship at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. She acted in summer stock and ritzed-up Mob-controlled nightclubs, including the Chez Paree in Chicago, where she made backstage friends with Sylvia Fine and her husband, Danny Kaye, before Kaye became a star in Moss's *Lady in the Dark*. As the war neared an end, she tried to change her luck by becoming what her publicity handouts described as a "pink blonde."

She kept going. It was a small career, but one that made use of all the stamina and resilience she had developed coping with her mother. Her work was not negligible, but would have merited only a line or two in *Variety* if she had given up, and the career was, she admitted, "really on a downswing" by the end of the war.

One of her most admirable qualities was her sense of proportion. She was realistic about her gifts and stature as a performer. Her manner could be as grand as her gowns, but was seldom self-aggrandizing. She had seen Caruso, after all, and met Toscanini and broken bread with Gershwin. She knew that her talent was of a different order from the really big ones that seemed to come from nowhere and without conscious effort like, well, the high pianissimos she was never able to master. "Dose high pianissimos," she was told by voice teacher Madame Schoen-René, "come only from Gott!"

She respected talent greater than her own and understood that art's sources were finally a mystery. This awareness would make her in later life a highly effective arts advocate for everything from symphonies to circuses. It made her marvel in her youth at the seemingly effortless outpourings of "genius" (she called it that) that she had observed in George Gershwin and admired—at a distance—in Moss Hart. She always thought, in fact, that they resembled each other.

Looking back, Dora Sayers was convinced that Kitty had quietly set her cap for Moss as early as the Bucks County weekend with Norman Krasna. Certainly she was prepared to renounce spinsterhood for him when the two women shared a taxi from the Algonquin just before Sayers's U.S.O. tour with Moss and *The Man Who Came to Dinner*. After the tour they bumped into each other at Bonwit Teller, and Sayers confirmed the end of her relationship with Moss. She was, as a matter of curious fact, now seeing (and would soon marry) screen and stage actor Ralph Forbes, who Kitty claimed had once been in love with *her*.

Kitty may have been pursuing Moss, but not for want of anything better to do in her romantic life. By war's end she was seriously involved with Irwin Swann, an advertising executive and sometime publisher. Swann was the widower of Tamara, the singer who died in an airplane crash during a U.S.O. tour, after winning fame by introducing Jerome Kern's "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes" in *Roberta*.

If Kitty had eyes for Moss, there remained the fact that he seemed hardly aware of her. Then, in July, shortly before V-J Day, there was a final war-bond rally at Madison Square Garden, where Kitty performed with Danny Kaye and others. Lillian Hellman invited participants to a party after the rally, but Kitty decided she was too tired to attend and joined Swann at his apartment for a late supper. Hortense telephoned to remind her of the Hellman party, adding, "Your hero is going to be there Kitty changed her plans.

She arrived unescorted just as Mo pulled up in a taxi with Edna Ferber, a she attached herself to them as if they h been a trio. Once inside she did what s did best: she sang and she listened. wanted to rivet his attention," she admitte "I looked at him as if it were the most i portant question in the world and I sai 'Moss, tell me about your trip to the Sou Pacific.' I knew I had riveted his attentio I knew that he had looked at me for t first time with a seeing eye."

Moss invited her to lunch at '21' to co tinue the conversation, and then to Buc County for the weekend. She began to lo like another "Moss's girl" that summer, b then Beatrice Kaufman died, and Moss production of a melodrama he directed b hadn't written, called *The Secret Roo* flopped, and Kitty had singing jobs th took her out of town. At the end of t year she returned from an engagement Montreal to find that Moss and Phyllis Ce the wife of Random House publisher Be nett Cerf, were giving a New Year's Eve pa ty, and she had promised to celebrate wi Irwin Swann. "[Moss] was furious that would not break the date," she said. He f lowed her to Chicago on her next job and Miami on the one after that.

Moss was, after the failure of *The Secr Room*, working on a new play of his ow the serious one he was always promising deliver. He went to California with the ta ent agent Irving Lazar on a preliminar casting trip while Kitty sang in nightclu and made plans for summer stock. Mo telephoned her often from California; i one such call he offhandedly suggeste marriage, but it was short of a proposa "He wasn't ardent enough," she decide and told him she didn't want to discuss i She hung up and wondered what on eart she had done and why.

itty Carlisle believed in denial, which presupposed something to deny. She ld not pretend ignorance of rumors ut Moss, no matter how great a catch might be. He had been dependent on trice Kaufman, who did "everything for ," and his other relationships with wom- ıad been "stormy." She knew Sayers, of rse, and was friendly with the comedi- e Paula Laurence, who had briefly been ther "Moss's girl," and she knew about th Atwater. There had been "a lot of culation" about his sexuality "always sort loating around," she admitted years lat- "He was obviously talked about a great l," and in all kinds of ways. "I used to r 'Moss Hart is living on the 26th floor he Waldorf and he is suicidal!'"

Moss discussed with her his psychoanaly- with Dr. Lawrence S. Kubie, but only in oretical terms, never talking about speci- or symptoms. Kitty listened sympathe- ılly, and "whatever his problems were, I n't know. And I didn't ask. Because I didn't nt him to disappear," she said, sounding if she were talking about her mother and lifelong fear of abandonment.

But she *did* ask. "I asked him point-blank. ıid, 'Have you ever been a practicing ho- sexual?' And he said there was nothing it. 'Absolutely not.' He said there had en a couple of people who had made sses at him. And that was it. I never gave ınother thought."

Some of the talk she had heard, howev- was accurate. He *had* been suicidal on 26th floor of the Waldorf, or so he told oducer Dore Schary at the time, and ere had been more than a couple of peo- and a couple of passes. It seems clear at his sexuality had never been rigidly this that, and that he functioned sexually at rious times in various ways. He enjoyed as a pastime readily available to him, t it never ruled his life. He once defined for Dora Sayers as "the most fun you uld have without laughing." Guilt, shame, ır, or confusion may have warred with pulse from time to time and made life fficult for partners; nevertheless, what he nged for was not a physical relationship much as a satisfying emotional one.

What he said or didn't say to Kitty was s important than his taking a step into e kind of commitment and away from an- her and doing so willingly. It happened mply enough. In July 1946, when he was most 42 and she was two months shy of , Kitty was appearing at the Bucks Coun- Playhouse for two weeks in a play called *night or Never*. Moss insisted she stay at irview Farm, and there he helped her arn her lines. She later related that at some oint in giving cues he said to her, "You are e One, the Only One for me," and she an- ered, "I will trust my life to you."

If the words sound undramatic and lack- ing in passion for a love match, they are. In a perhaps unguarded moment (or perhaps not), Kitty told Barbaralee Diamonstein, then interviewing her for an oral history that could not be published during her lifetime, that she had not been in love with Moss when they married. Nor, she believed, was he in love with her. It was the right step for the right people at the right time. It was suitable. The love part could come later.

On August 10 they were married in a five-minute single-ring ceremony in New Hope, Pennsylvania, in the parlor of Justice of the Peace John Simon. Kitty wore a red-and-white print dress and a red straw hat that was a prop from her play. Moss looked "jittery," a reporter said.

They had invited no guests, but Moss's brother, Bernie, and his lifelong business manager, Joe Hyman, and Hortense heard about their plans and came down from New York uninvited. Kitty remembered, "I was so nervous, I didn't think it was all that wonderful. My mother was looking to one side as if she were witnessing a taxi accident."

A photographer took pictures. Locals from New Hope threw rice, exciting Moss's Old English sheepdog, which kept trying to shake hands with his master at the reception that followed at Fairview Farm. The newlyweds were toasted by Moss's best friend, playwright Jerome Chodorov, and his wife, Rhea, and by George Kaufman and a growing throng from New York who were staying at Kaufman's farm with him.

At one point Moss wandered from the house down to the pool, where some of Kaufman's weekend guests were taking the sun, young men mostly from the theater. Playwright Arthur Laurents was among them, and he recalled in his 1999 memoir, *Original Story By,* how disconcerting, even embarrassing, it was when Moss suggested, so soon after his wedding, that they take off their suits because there were "no girls present."

After the guests left, the bride was startled to learn that Moss had not planned on separate bedrooms or even separate beds. "I was so miserable I called my mother and said, 'You have to tell Moss, I can't sleep in the same bed with him!' And she said, 'I don't think that is my role.'"

They spent most of their honeymoon at the Bucks County Playhouse acting in *The Man Who Came to Dinner.* Moss played Sheridan Whiteside, and Kitty played Maggie Cutler. It was a hit.

"We were astonished that Moss wanted to marry and father children," Irene Selznick remembered, speaking for the Hollywood and New York wives who doted on Moss, "but if that's what he wanted, we were prepared to support him." Not without comment, however. Selznick, who was then married to David Selznick, the Hollywood producer, noted, "We had seen Moss from time to time with women—usually just dogs. He could have had any girl in the world if he really wanted one, and we all thought, Kitty *Carlisle?*"

The new Mrs. Hart was fearful all over again of pushing in where others thought she didn't belong. She shrewdly styled herself "the new kid on the block" and left the spotlight to Moss. She suffered graciously George Kaufman's acerbic manner and his disconcerting habit of rolling his eyes whenever Hortense entered the room. She pretended not to have heard—and never forgot—Edith Atwater's wisecrack that Moss had married her only because she could speak French to the headwaiter.

She found Irene Selznick's imperial certainties "a particular trial," and regretted being jealous of William Paley's wife Dorothy, but she was. Both these women were, or soon would be, divorced from their famous husbands, adding to the threat they posed, though their chic was intimidating enough. The other Dorothy, the wife of Richard Rodgers, seemed "bristly and judgmental," and Kitty suspected Phyllis Cerf of trying to put some kind of "whammy" on her by sheer force of personality. She deferred to these women, acknowledged the luster they added to New York social and cultural life, and absorbed their accents and style of discourse as she had once acquired languages in other foreign lands. In time they became devoted friends. As Irene Selznick put it, "We accepted Kitty because Moss wanted us to, but she turned out to be an intelligent, honest, loving woman, and we accepted her for herself."

Winning their approval was no mean victory, and it was not made simpler by Moss's habit of treating her as a decorative accessory, though it was a role she eagerly accepted. "I had wanted to marry him for so long, and I thought he was a genius, and I was perfectly happy to live his life," she said. "I loved his life."

It would be two years before she gave a dinner party on her own. Until then Moss organized and cast dinners as if they were little plays. He told her whom to invite, what to wear, and often purchased her wardrobe for her, giving rise to the still-current (unsubstantiated) rumor that he was a secret cross-dresser. It wasn't Norman Krasna who had visualized her coming down the staircase in a velvet gown to greet the guests: it was the master of Fairview Farm himself.

"Moss dressed me up a lot," she admitted. "He used to take me to John-Frederics to make me wonderful headdresses that I

would wear at night to go to the theater." But the man who had directed Gertrude Lawrence as a great fashion editor in *Lady in the Dark* could be as autocratic as any fashion doyenne. "I remember once I ordered a coat, and it was pearl gray and it had silver fox all the way around the bottom," Kitty reported. "I tried it on for him and he said, 'Honey, where are you going to wear that? To a parade?'"

A parade was just what their married life resembled, a flashbulb-lit procession of dinners, theater visits, parties, and fashionable entrances through fashionable doorways in New York, where Moss continued writing and directing such plays as *Light Up the Sky* and *The Climate of Eden,* and in Hollywood, where he wrote the screenplays for *Gentleman's Agreement* with Gregory Peck, *Hans Christian Andersen* with Danny Kaye, and—most memorably—*A Star Is Born* with Judy Garland. He and Kitty would glitter together until his death in 1961 at only 57, and they would have two children, Christopher, who is now a theatrical producer, and Cathy, now a doctor. Kitty became Moss's full-time confidante and sometime consultant, and in 1956 she gave him a piece of advice that saved his greatest production.

Even after Moss said yes to what became *My Fair Lady,* he was uncertain enough about its prospects to insist that Herman Levin, the producer, fund the ongoing development of his current project, *In the Pink,* until it or the Lerner and Loewe musical went into rehearsal. He barely knew Alan Lerner and Frederick Loewe, neither their score nor their book was close to completion, and the idea of a *Pygmalion* musical still caused widespread skepticism on the Rialto. Moreover, he was battling mood downswings intensified by the restrictions of a protracted physical recovery from a heart attack. As he recuperated, he saw Kubie in the city and tossed and turned with insomnia at his new house on the Jersey Shore.

He took long, labored walks beside the ocean when serious depression set in. Kitty was often at his side, trudging through the sand with an umbrella raised against the elements, as if sheer doggedness could ameliorate his condition. She claimed ever after that she never questioned him directly about his analysis or Kubie's treatment, but it hardly mattered. Whether she did or didn't—or sympathized with or even understood the process—she was determined to provide support.

His emotional and physical states were worsened by lack of sleep. Kitty finally insisted he demand the then new Librium or some other sedative from Kubie, but Kubie refused, perhaps aware that Moss had been relying on sleeping pills for more than 30 years. Besides, he said, the insomnia was useful for the psychoanalytic process, and medication that alleviated sleeplessness might also "mask his symptoms."

Kitty was infuriated, and confronted Kubie on the telephone. "*Mask the symptoms?*" she demanded. "The man has been in analysis for 15 years and he's had a heart attack and he can't sleep! If you don't give me those tranquilizers, I am going to come to New York and snatch you bald-headed."

Moss got his pills. More therapeutic, he got back to work in the theater.

Rehearsals of *My Fair Lady* began at the New Amsterdam Theater on January 3, 1956. Rex Harrison's London run in *Bell, Book, and Candle* had been unexpectedly extended over the summer owing to a surprise influx of American tourists riding high on a strong dollar. Harrison, still feuding with his co-star wife, Lilli Palmer, and increasingly involved with the comedienne Kay Kendall, was only too eager to be free of the comedy but was contractually bound to it until business fell below a certain point or until April 1956, whichever came first. Herman Levin had booked theaters for *My Fair Lady* tryouts in January, now an impossible date to meet unless Harrison were bought out of his London contract with the British producer Binkie Beaumont.

With no leverage, Levin yielded to Beaumont's demands for a cash payment of £25,000 and—to sweeten the deal—the English and Continental rights to the musical the English impresario had derided as "absolutely *insane,*" plus 1.5 percent of the Broadway and touring-company grosses.

Julie Andrews, cast almost two months before Moss signed on to the show, remembers meeting him for the first time at the start of rehearsals. She appeared modest and at ease meeting the man who "really changed my life" by becoming her personal Pygmalion. In truth, "I was simply terrified. Working with Rex Harrison and Stanley Holloway, and meeting a director I'd never worked with before." Moss told her how "enchanting" he had found her in *The Boy Friend,* Sandy Wilson's musical spoof of the 1920s, and he privately thought her charmingly unspoiled and alarmingly unseasoned.

She was the first actress in memory playing the role to be the age of the character Bernard Shaw wrote. Her soprano voice was, as Alan Lerner noted, "so flexible she could sing light opera and popular with equal ease." She had "immaculate diction." She "moved with grace." And "she was as pretty as any eye might decide her to be. She was, as the world would learn, all those things. What she was not was Eliza Doolittle.

Her acting experience had been a concern from the beginning, which accounted for her multiple auditions. Lerner later followed that "her first tryouts had not been very good," and he had given her a copy of Shaw's play to study over the summer and fall. Her modesty was both a charming virtue and a handicap; even with her name in lights above the title of *The Boy Friend,* Lerner said, she "had no sense of being a star, none of the sense of obligation that a star has toward a play." The truth was she had little sense of herself onstage and had never in her life worked out a characterization of any greater depth than "the principal girl who," in her own description, "makes goo-goo eyes at Our Hero and gets him in the end."

Moss's custom was to get a show on its feet as soon as possible, and *My Fair Lady* was up and walking within four days. It was glaringly apparent that Andrews was learning on the job. "I got worse, not better," she admitted. "It was obvious to everyone that I was out of my depth, and the awful thing was that I knew it. It only made things worse."

But at 20 she was a veteran and a trouper. She had made her professional debut with her pianist mother and tenor stepfather at 10, joining their vaudeville act with what she called "bastardized versions of operatic arias," standing on a beer crate to reach the microphone. She was a pigtailed child with unstraightened teeth and a grown-up voice of crystalline clarity which ranged up and down four octaves in perfect pitch. She soon became the headliner of the family act, and breadwinner too, appearing in the title roles of pantomimes such as *Cinderella* and *Humpty Dumpty.* She even sang "God Save the Queen" in a royal command performance that headlined Danny Kaye when she was only 13.

Now she was trying on a role identified with such actresses as Mrs. Patrick Campbell, Lynn Fontanne, Wendy Hiller, and Gertrude Lawrence, a far cry from *Humpty Dumpty.* "I didn't know what Eliza should be," she realized, "a whiny girl or a gutsy girl, a weak character or a strong one." She read and reread the play, saw and resaw the 1938 movie *Pygmalion* when Lerner screened it for her, and felt overwhelmed by the dawning sense of having taken on "a monstrous task." She felt secure enough with the singing, but "when it came to acting, I was simply awful at first and terrified of Rex Harrison."

Harrison "hated the whole idea of working with this silly little girl," one observer

ed, especially when she arrived at the ater practicing her scales, something as a nonsinger couldn't begin to do. sical-theater historian Miles Kreuger, n fresh out of Bard College and work- on Lerner's office staff, remembered rrison from rehearsal days as "one of nastiest people one could ever want neet—witty and stylish and marvelous en he was in a good mood, and cruel- cutting when he wasn't, and he often sn't. He was very cruel with Julie An- ws. Not *to* her, but out her." Moss was mographically sensi- to star tensions and flicts of this kind, but n he admitted early on t "she didn't have a e about playing Eliza."





KAUFMAN-AND-HART-LAND
Kaufman and Hart's collaborations included: *above, Once in a Lifetime,* with Sally Phipps, Charles Halton, Hugh O'Connell, and Walter Dreher (Broadway, 1930), and, *left, You Can't Take It with You,* starring James Stewart and Edward Arnold in the 1938 film version.



A LAUGH A MINUTE
Other evergreen Kaufman-and-Hart comedies: *right, The Man Who Came to Dinner,* starring Bette Davis and Monty Woolley in the 1941 movie version, and, *below; George Washington Slept Here,* with Ann Sheridan, Jack Benny, and Percy Kilbride in the 1942 film.



e vented his frustra- tions to Kitty after t five days of rehears- "If I were [the great oducer-playwright] vid Belasco," he said, would take Julie to a tel for the weekend. I'd ver let her out; I'd or- r up room service. I'd ep her there and *paste* e part on her." Kitty minded him he had sted parts on *her,* and ked why he didn't do just that. The situation was tense and owing volatile. Almost everyone the company remembered that some point in the first week arrison threw down a prop—some member a cane, others say it is his script—and announced in voice that carried to both ends 42nd Street, "If that girl is here Monday giving the same god- mned performance, I am out of is show!" Heads swiveled and oze. Kreuger remembered Harri- n calling Andrews "that bitch," while eid Shelton, then a member of the cho- s, said the words were even bluer, but natever they were, no one wanted to test arrison's threat or argue the point. Moss cided to do what he thought Belasco ould have done.

He dismissed the company and closed e New Amsterdam Roof for the weekend everyone but himself, Biff Liff, who was e production stage manager, and Andrews. t was the sort of thing you couldn't do in ont of a company," Moss said, "without stroying a human being. We met in this ent, lonely dark theater, and I told her, ulie, this is stolen time, time I can't really ford. So there can be no time for polite- ness, and you mustn't take offense, because there aren't any second chances in the the- ater. There isn't time to sit down and do the whole Actors' Studio bit. We have to start from the first line and go over the play line by line.'"

After the morning costume fittings, Moss worked with her from 2 in the after- noon until 6 in the evening; they broke for a meal, then resumed at 8 and worked till 11. Like a Henry Higgins in reverse, he dredged up Cockney-isms he had heard from his English-born father in childhood and had used playing the Cockney slave- trader Smithers in *The Emperor Jones* (she thought his accent "atrocious"); he helped her understand the play line by line, joke by joke, or, if she didn't fully understand, *sound* as if she did. She recalls his telling her bluntly, "You're playing this like a Girl Guide," or "You haven't any idea how to play that," or "You're not thinking, you're just oozing out the scene," or "You're too light, much too light," or "I can't hear you. I want this louder. I want that angri- er." Over two days, she said, "he bullied, cajoled, pleaded, scolded, encouraged." According to Liff, he also delivered an appeal to old-fashioned showbiz ambition. "You want to be a star," he told her, "you'd better *be* a star. And you're going to have to play as though you *are* a star. This is a starring role and you've got to stop being intimidated."

The only intimidating factor at that moment was Moss, using a canny psy- chological ploy in which he became a stern but be- nign version of the twin terrors she could not face down directly—Harrison and Shaw—in a setting that allowed her to fight back and grow or go down in defeat.

She remembered, "Occasionally he would stomp up onto the stage to inter- rupt and show me exactly how he wanted it done," much as he had once done for Kitty when he directed her on Broadway in *Anniversary Waltz* in 1954. The man who had once unhesitatingly given an entire performance for cast and crew as Gertrude Lawrence playing Liza Elliott in *Lady in the Dark* was not hesitant to try Eliza Doolittle on for size in front of Andrews. "I remember when he snatched Eliza's purse from my hand and hit out at an imaginary Higgins, to show me how he wanted it done," she said. "And then I have a picture of him holding Eliza's teacup, very prim and proper with that ring finger extended. At times he actually became Eliza Doolittle, and I just kind of stood back and watched.

"He was really the strongest force that I had ever come up against," she said. "I never had anything like it before. I just wanted to sit down and weep in despair. Or I got angry, at which time I yelled back at him, which was exactly what he wanted, of course. I think for a while I even hated him."

"Those two days made the difference," Moss said. "We were both absolutely done

in, exhausted. But she made it. She has that terrible English strength that makes you wonder why they lost India."

Harrison's concern about his singing—he claimed to have a vocal range of a note and a half—was less easily handled. Frederick Loewe had taken the measure of his voice in London and composed songs for him that could be delivered in sprechstimme, a manner of speaking rhythmically and on key that suggests singing. Still, as Lerner's associate Stone "Bud" Widney recalled, "Rex was justifiably scared to death," with Holloway belting out his numbers like a brass band and Julie growing in assurance and maintaining her coloratura's perfect pitch.

Harrison was frightened and he was petty. Before the company left for tryouts in New Haven, he decided it was demeaning for him to remain passively onstage while Eliza sang her defiant "Without You" late in the second act—a song he didn't like anyway, because it was at his expense. "I'm not going to stand up there and look like a cunt while this young girl sings a song at me," he announced, and walked off the stage.

He walked off every time the song was sung. Moss did nothing, giving him enough rope, he told Lerner, because "you can't fight every day of your life or you dissipate your strength and it becomes a way of life. In every play there's one battle you have to win, and when we're in the best position we will do battle."

The best position was a train seat on the way to New Haven. Moss sidled in next to Harrison and calmly but firmly confronted the issue. "I think you should at least give me the courtesy of seeing how I would like to stage it," he said, "because the song is going to get sung, don't make any mistake about that. It's going to be sung!" Pause. "Now, you can walk offstage while it's being sung and walk on again when it's over, but you will look like the biggest horse's ass in the history of the theater. So I would suggest that you at least come to the rehearsal and see how it could be staged."

Harrison bristled, but Lerner added a mollifying tag to the scene for Higgins after Eliza's song in which he could sing-chortle, "I did it. I did it. I said I'd make a woman and indeed I did." Harrison, having been given literally the last word, finally did as he was told.

On February 4, opening night in New Haven, the Shubert Theater was sold out and a blizzard raged. Harrison, paralyzed with fear, refused to go on. No amount of persuasion by Moss, Lerner, Loewe, or Levin could overcome his terror. Radio announcements were hastily broadcast that the performance was canceled due to that familiar, all-purpose gremlin: "technical difficulties."

However, by six o'clock in the evening, lines were forming in the snow outside the theater. Ticket holders had left home early because of the storm and had missed the radio bulletins. The manager of the Shubert confronted the situation, shaking with rage. "There will be a riot in this lobby at 7:30 when I announce that there won't be any performance," he said. "You people leave here next week and move on, but I have to face this same audience every week." He threatened to announce from the stage the simple, disastrous truth "that Rex Harrison refuses to go on."

Harrison's New York agent arrived, went pale as he grasped the situation, and told his client he was likely never to work again if word got out, and he would personally see to it that word got out. The local theatergoers were, in any case, augmented by the usual advance-guard New Yorkers Moss called the "wrecking crew" (Lerner called them "dear shits"), most of them fairly aching to return to New York with reports of disaster. The combined threats convinced Harrison he had no choice, but by this time his sense of terror had become contagious. Robert Coote, playing Colonel Pickering, was, Widney remembered, "a basket case. He was more terrified than Rex, but he was getting his fear *from* Rex."

Finally, around 8:45, the houselights dimmed. Moss stepped before the curtain to announce stoically that the turntables weren't working and anyone who wanted a refund or exchange of tickets could apply at the box office. A few did and may still regret it. Harrison was greeted warmly by the audience on his entrance and managed to get through a wobbly "Why Can't the English" without betraying more than opening-night jitters. Then, according to Widney, "the combination of Moss's calm steady-at-the-helm captain and being suddenly confronted onstage with a terrific pro in Julie Andrews calmed Rex down. Julie sang 'Wouldn't It Be Loverly' with a sense of professional security confident enough to lend Rex the strength to get through it—in spite of his terror and his earlier skepticism about *her.* Then Stanley came on, a fearless old music-hall pro, and did 'With a Little Bit o' Luck' and brought down the house. Rex was onstage with two old pros and their security *had* to register on him. They went through hell getting him past that fear on opening night, but once he did it, he did it."

The act progressed smoothly, growing in strength until Eliza's breakthrough with "The Rain in Spain" and "Hartford, Hereford, and Hampshire." Harrison as Higgins began his rhythmic tango moves, and was joined by Andrews and the evening's other terrified nonsinger, Coote. They sang and danced their way through an infectious spirited "The Rain in Spain" that seemed to levitate the entire Shubert Theater, and at its climax all three collapsed on the sofa just as Moss had staged it. They were engulfed by a swelling roar, a tidal wave coming at them from the auditorium. The New Haven audience had risen to its feet as one and, sharing the joy of Eliza's mastery of vowels and aitches, were cheering, laughing, screaming, stomping, whooping, and bringing the show to a standstill. Harrison and Coote had never experienced anything like this in drawing-room comedy and froze, dumbfounded. Finally Andrews grabbed the two of them and dragged them to the apron of the stage, where she led them in bows so that the audience tumult could subside and allow them to get on with the show.

My Fair Lady became a spectacular success, a phenomenon, the best-known and most admired musical of its era, the most widely performed and translated operetta since *The Merry Widow,* at the beginning of the century. It would surpass *Oklahoma!* as the longest-running musical on Broadway by almost 500 performances, registering a phenomenal 2,717 curtains until the final one fell in September 1962, almost seven years after it had first gone up.

Records fell everywhere. The film rights were sold to Warner Bros. for a then record $5.5 million. The original-cast album, recorded monaurally, became the No. 1 album in the nation and the best-selling album in the history of Columbia Records, a feat repeated by the London-cast album, recorded later in the then new stereo process, which became the *new* best-selling album in Columbia's history, relegating the first album to the No. 2 position on the hit parade after an almost three-year reign as No. 1. Even more remarkably, original-cast albums in Spanish, German, Italian, Portuguese, Hebrew, and other languages topped local charts as productions proliferated around the world.

There have been three revivals on Broadway to date, in 1975, 1981, and 1993. International productions show no signs of abating almost 50 years later, particularly in Europe, where it has entered the permanent repertory of opera houses in Germany and Austria. The most recent estimate of aggregate earnings topped $800 million, and may yet reach a billion.

On December 23, 1957, Harrison gave his last performance of the original Broadway run. It was his 750th, and to commemorate the occasion Kay Kendall, his bride of six months, went onstage unannounced as the Queen of Transylvania in the Embassy Ball scene, which ended the first act. Her escort—also unannounced—was Moss. It was his last appearance on a Broadway stage, but far from his last hurrah. □

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The New York ...es reported the odd chain of phone calls ... meetings with influential Republicans ...ich might have caused Miami-Dade's may... Alex Penelas, to use his influence to stop ... hand recount in Miami-Dade County. ...nelas denied the charge.) Penelas had been ... Al Gore supporter until Elián González ...ived in Miami. In the grand game of im...cit linkage, power is often exerted subtly ... indirectly. Helping George W. Bush get the White House would be the ultimate ... or a self-interested Miami ...litician could provide. Penelas, ...o relies on Miami's Cuban... publican voting base, under...od the feelings of his richest ...pporters. According to this ...nario, it was no accident that ...seph Klock showed up as ...therine Harris's lawyer. "That ... to make sure that there is a ...e connection between her and ... Cubans," an insider says. But ...ock, as one of the most pow...ul lawyers in the state, could ...t as well have been brought in ... the other side. "I bet you I ...n't like Gore even more than ...fy doesn't like Gore," Klock ...d me on the morning he an...unced his strategy to stop the ...orida recount. "In terms of ...gar policy, I get the impres...n that the industry thinks Gore ...ght be better, but they just can't ...mach him.... For the Farm ...ll, I think George W. would be ...good president." Klock main...ins that there is no link be...een his role for the Fanjuls and ...hat he did for the Republicans.

Klock's invective is often ...rled at reporters for *Time* and ...*rbes* who characterize Pepe and Alfy Fanjul ... sugar's bad boys, milking their soft-money ...nnections to protect their $65-million-a-year ...bsidy: "*Time* is an asshole! I see red when ...see the name *Forbes*. I think it is irrespon...ble of *Forbes* [to attack the Fanjuls]—the ...wners there are conspicuously consumptu...us! The only thing Malcolm Forbes did not ...o with a $100 bill is light a cigar."

As the Bygrave cases moved through the ...gal system, Klock was every bit as aggres...ve as he would be for Katherine Harris a ...ear later. He takes full credit for persuad...ng the Fanjuls to get rid of migrant labor ...nd mechanize their fields. "I told Alfy, 'Unless you want to move into Belle Glade, ...rive a pickup truck, and supply cars and ...wo-bedroom apartments to all the workers, ...et out of this business.' ... The chairman did not want to mechanize the fields. I made him.... When all this started with the workers and they filed a lawsuit, Alfy said, 'No one in this company cheats workers on their wages. It is against the policy of this company, and I want you to report it to me if it happens.'"

Klock has lost all patience with the tactics of Edward Tuddenham. "He is a crazed ideologue, isn't he? My nickname for him is the windchill factor. When you are a philosopher king, you understand what is best for everyone in the world. It is unnecessary to be concerned with little details like whether or not people eat! What is important is principle! These guys are the foobirds.... They want the big glory cases, the law reform, the precedent-setting cases!"



HIRED GUNS

Top, Joseph Klock, a chief Fanjul adviser, representing Florida secretary of state Katherine Harris in the 2000 election imbroglio in Tallahassee. *Above,* Willie Gary, who argued for the Fanjuls against the Tuddenham team, in his office in Stuart, Florida.

Before I am allowed to interview Alfy and Pepe Fanjul, I am given a tour of their sugar mills and refineries, the now spotless empty barracks of the former H-2 workers, and warehouses stocked with Florida Crystals' products, especially rice and granulated sugar. There are so many products and varieties, the warehouses seem like a gargantuan A&P. The Fanjuls are justifiably proud of what they have created—it is American industry at its best. Twenty-four hours a day, their refineries pump the brown syrup that is turned into white crystals and bagged and shipped.

Flo-Sun's offices are in a shopping center with a mock-Tudor front around the corner from the Flagler museum. The Fanjuls are known for their economies. According to Tuddenham, the company's cost per ton for wages was generally, and remarkably, within a penny or two of what they budgeted. Although Pepe lives in a 30-room mansion near the Breakers, his office is surprisingly simple. The only sign of corporate wealth is the Flo-Sun steward who offers me Cuban pastries on a tray. At my request, Pepe has gathered 1950s photographs of the mansions and farms in Cuba that belonged to the Fanjuls' father and their maternal grandfather, Jose Gomez-Mena.

The mansion where Gomez-Mena used to live with his wife, Elizarda, is now the Museo Nacional de Artes Decorativas. With its Palladian balconies, Ionic columns, and rooms preserved in the Louis XV and XVI styles favored by the Gomez-Menas' decorator, Henri Samuel, the museum is intended to show Cubans how Spanish grandees once lived, surrounded by Staffordshire, Derby, Wedgwood, Sèvres, and Emile Gallé, in vast rooms with themes—Chinese, neoclassical, and English.

On a recent visit to Havana, I asked the young woman guarding the Chinese room, with its deteriorating coromandel screens, about the Gomez-Menas and the Fanjuls. "*Poderoso,*" she said softly, meaning powerful. Boldini's portrait of Gomez-Mena's sister the Countess Revilla de Camargo is still in place, but the collection of works by the Spanish painter Joaquin Sorolla has been moved to the National Museum of Fine Arts. The family's former sugar headquarters, the Manzana de Gomez-Mena, an imposing, block-long Colonial building, is now a mall. Alfy and Pepe's childhood home in the country-club section of Havana is today one of Fidel Castro's residences.

According to *la bola,* the rumor mill in Havana, the Gomez-Mena family emulated the French aristocracy and were as oblivious to the conditions in the fields as their 18th-century counterparts. Sugar had controlled the Cuban economy since the

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19th century. Of the ruling sugar families, the Lobos were thought of as the most decent, whereas the Gomez-Menas had a reputation for being ruthless. While Alfy and Pepe Fanjul attended dances at the Havana Yacht Club, Cuba's 500,000 cane cutters virtually starved six months out of the year. In Havana, at the Museo de la Revolución, there are now special display cases showing the brutal conditions in the sugar fields, which helped bring about the fall of the Batista regime.

Home movies show Alfy's and Pepe's lives as young sugar princes, lolling around the swimming pool at their beach house in Veradero. Sent to college in America, they behaved like the caudillos they had been reared to be. In Cuba, society columnists chronicled the parties the Fanjuls threw for the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, and their golf games with Loel Guinness, but the Fidelistas began to refer to the family openly as "parasites and leeches." "When I left Havana for the last time, Errol Flynn was on the plane with me with his girlfriend," Pepe says lightly. The essence of the Fanjul brothers' lives in exile has been their relentless determination to get back what they lost in Havana.

Pepe and Alfy grew up in the closed world of Havana's colonial aristocracy. Their grandmother kept clippings from the magazine *Social* of the costume she had worn to a ball in 1926 where everyone dressed in the style of Watteau. The alliance of Alfy and Pepe's father and mother brought together two of Cuba's great sugar fortunes. An only child, Lillian Fanjul warred with her glamorous stepmother, Elizarda, and doted on her five children, Alfy, Lillian, Pepe, Alexander, and Andres. Family members believe that Alfy inherited his mettle from his mother. When Jose Gomez-Mena died in Florida without a will soon after the Fanjuls came to America, Lillian Fanjul told her stepmother coldly, "You don't deserve any money.... Sell your jewelry—you have a lot of it."

Pepe Fanjul's conversation is as light as a meringue. He is a master of moving the dialogue along, an epicene flirt with a mustache who wears cashmere jackets and pastel socks. Pepe and his wife, Emilia, are fixtures on the New York social scene and often play host at the Fanjuls' Dominican Republic resort, Casa de Campo, with its swimming pools, country club, 5,000-seat theater, and an architectural folly, Altos de Chavon, built to resemble a 16th-century village. Recently, Alfy filed for a divorce there. His wife, Tina, the mother of his children, countersued him in Florida, claiming that his assets were in America. (The divorce was finalized in Florida last year.) In Palm Beach, Pepe lives in a mansion that was formerly owned by the Krupp family, who had manufactured munitions for the Nazis. Each year, during the holidays, he mails out a list of the most social local families, a sort of Palm Beach 200. Pepe is fond of recounting amusing moments from the grand days, going back to the 19th century, when his relatives ruled Havana's sugar society.

As Alfy Fanjul greets me, he says, "This is the first time I have given an in-depth interview.... We want you to show our side of the issue. I thought it was the time to do it." He has a short neck, dark eyes, and an expression that is wary and opaque, Bogart-like in its intensity. His polite tone contradicts the palpable emotions churning underneath. He has the old-world manners of a Spanish aristocrat, a cool detachment that indicates he is accustomed to being in control. Seven years older than Pepe, Alfy was the architect of the family's rise in America. There is about him an atmosphere of throttled energy, of a certitude that is indirect. "I have never seen Alfy emotional on any subject," Klock says.

Once at a fund-raising dinner with Al Gore, Alfy Fanjul brought up the 20-year, $300 million plan to clean up the Everglades that Big Sugar had committed to in 1994. Gore's reaction was fast and combative. He appeared irritated that this sugar baron—no matter how much money he had donated—would think that Gore could be massaged in this way. In 1996, Gore had proposed a penny-a-pound "polluter's tax" to protect the Everglades, and had lobbied to turn 100,000 acres of sugarcane fields back into swampland. The Fanjuls had taken Gore on then, calling the president while he was telling Monica Lewinsky that their relationship was over. They also mounted a counterattack on the penny-a-pound ballot initiative which featured incendiary TV commercials saying that the penny a pound would put sugar farmers out of business.

Sitting at the table that night, Gore began multiplying tons of sugar by 10 cents a pound—sugar was then selling for about 10 cents above the world-market price—and made it clear that he felt Big Sugar had gotten off cheaply. Seemingly unimpressed by Big Sugar's investment of $300 million over 20 years, Gore asked, "And how much sugar subsidy do you get every year?" "It's not a subsidy," Alfy replied. He kept trying to convince the vice president that the $65 million subsidy that enriches Florida Crystals was sensible policy, but when he saw that he was getting nowhere, he retreated into a cold silence.

The defining moment of Alfy Fanjul's life came in 1959, when Castro's rebels threw their machine guns down on the conference table at his family's headquarters on the Avenida de Gomez-Mena, the Havana street named after his grandfather. The room was decorated with maps indicating the w sweep of the Fanjul and Gomez-Mena pr erties, a total of 150,000 acres and 10 su mills. "They were trying to explain to us process of what they were going to do a how they were going to take our prope away. They circled a wall map and sa 'This will be ours. All of it.'" Fanjul was years old and had recently graduated fr Fordham University in New York. "I sa 'This is not the law.' I was young, but I not brash."

He had grown up in a world of brib watching his father pay *mordidas* to Pr dent Fulgencio Batista, which, he says, w "the cost of doing business with dictator The Fanjuls stayed above the fray of Cub politics and refused to listen to rumors Batista's brutal practice of torturing his e mies. Fanjul senior turned down the dic tor's offer to make him an ambassador. " was above politics," says Alfy.

It was inconceivable to the Fanjuls tha Communist could ever take over Cuba, matter how much support he had from middle class. On New Year's Eve of 19 as Alfy and Pepe Fanjul were watching fireworks at the Havana Yacht Club, wo spread through the party that Batista h fled. Soon after, armed militia arrived at Fanjuls' house and arrested Fanjul seni They sealed off parts of the house and co mandeered the family's cars. Alfonso Fan was interrogated at police headquarters hours, until finally a woman appeared a said, "Release him. He has nothing to with the Batista government."

That summer Pepe and Alfy Fanjul's ther left for America. He owned apartme buildings in New York, and he was convinc he could wait out the revolution and th return home. Alfy was left in charge of t business. He was persecuted by the Fidelist and even shot at in his car. Several times had to lie down on the floor of his office get out of the range of gunfire. Warned th he would be killed if he remained at hon he stayed with friends and moved from hou to house. "The last day I was in Havana went to our house and discovered $10,0 in the safe. I had to decide whether or n to take it. I decided it was too dangerous.

In New York, Pepe and Alfy's grandfath told them, "You have an imperative build up this business again. The money w not last until the next generation." It was opportune moment for anyone who und stood the sugar industry. After Castro's v tory, the United States embargoed all Cub sugar and created massive incentives f American production. In Florida, enginee drained thousands of acres of Everglad swamp, and U.S. Sugar, which was based Clewiston, expanded rapidly. The Fanjuls s tled in Palm Beach, and Alfy looked arou

sugar mills to buy. He found three dilapi-ted plants in Louisiana and, after enlisting o partners, acquired them for $165,000. ne Fanjuls had the plants dismantled and xen by barge to Osceola Farms, a 4,000-re parcel of land in the Everglades. In 59 the sugar industry in Florida was rela-ely small. But new types of cane and im-oved fertilizer were changing all that. Alfy njul set up an office in a deserted school-ouse, downwind from the plant. "The ell and the dust blew in for months," he ys. Their first crop, in 1961–62, brought in million, but the second year there were ods. "We lost everything and then some," lfy recalls.

"What really made this thing take off was e development of the farmworkers pro-am," he continues. With the help of the epartment of Labor, but with virtually o supervision by the department, growers ought in thousands of Jamaicans to cut the ne. Workers who could not cut fast enough ere often labeled "Code One"—meaning Refused work. Do not rehire"—and deport-d. The laborers had little recourse; they ed in remote camps on the farms and had o access to legal services. In the entire outheast area, there was only one official om the Department of Labor to monitor ork conditions. The Fanjuls expanded their creage through the Everglades. "I would ase land from anyone I could," Alfy says, but I always insisted on an option to buy the roperty. We were producing raw sugar and ould sell it to anyone who would refine it."

For years we operated under the radar," Pepe Fanjul tells me. They settled in alm Beach, where many grandees such as arl E. T. Smith, once the ambassador to uba, lived. Sugar had captivated the imagi-ation of other ambitious men, most notably harles Bluhdorn, the self-made, eccentric ustrian who had created Gulf & Western, ne conglomerate that owned Paramount Pic-ures and a string of other companies. Bluh-orn's office was in the G&W building on olumbus Circle in New York. During the lming of *The Godfather* in 1971, Paramount xecutives would walk in and try to discuss usiness with Bluhdorn, but he would just are at his Quotron stock machine and make alls to trade sugar futures. His favorite ven-ure was his South Puerto Rico Sugar com-any. "I watched him ride sugar up to 65 ents a pound," recalls Barry Diller, a former hairman of Paramount. "In one day he sold ll his positions—$150 million." But sugar as a political football, and it was subject o the ups and downs of the world market. ince the Depression, Congress had set im-ort quotas to protect American sugar farm-rs. Okeelanta, a subsidiary of South Puerto ico Sugar, controlled 90,000 acres of sugar roperty in South Florida and 240,000 acres in the Dominican Republic. When Bluhdorn visited Nixon in the White House, he hammered him to raise the Dominican Republic's sugar quotas, former commerce secretary Pete Peterson, now the chairman of the Blackstone Group, recalls.

In 1974 a price spike drove the sugar industry into overproduction, and the bottom fell out of the market. The government rushed in with guaranteed loans and financing, which became the basis of the current sugar program. If market prices fell short, farmers could make more money if they forfeited their crops, and it suddenly became clear to the Fanjuls—and every other potential sugar grower—that you could not lose if you converted cattle or vegetable acreage to sugarcane. In 1983, Charles Bluhdorn suddenly died of a heart attack. Gulf & Western was taken over by his second-in-command, Martin Davis, whose ferocious dealings with competitors and love-hate relationship with his mentor had been a staple of business reporters in the 1970s. One of Davis's first big decisions was to unload Bluhdorn's sugar holdings. "We all got together and tried to figure out how to put this up for sale," says a lawyer close to Bluhdorn who had begun to read exposés on the sugar business and had gone down to look at the cane cutters' barracks and found them "one degree short of Dachau." "Then in one day walked Mr. Alfy Fanjul, a young man from Florida," the lawyer says. "He floored us with his expertise."

One former Paramount executive remembers Alfy Fanjul differently. "He sat in a room and negotiated with Marty Davis and the company and simply stole it. It was like watching Minnesota Fats walking away with the pot." Pepe Fanjul recalls being left "for days" at a hotel, waiting for Martin Davis to give them their first audience. When they arrived at Gulf & Western, they noticed that half the offices on the elite top floor were empty. Davis told him, "Those were my enemies. I got rid of them when Charlie died." Fanjul had leveraged $240 million to acquire the Gulf & Western holdings that included Okeelanta. "That put us on the map," Pepe Fanjul tells me. By 1990, Florida Crystals had more acreage than U.S. Sugar, and at Casa de Campo in the Dominican Republic, *Harper's* reported, the Fanjuls entertained a Bush-administration official. "My father spent the last years of his life trying to figure out how to get to Cuba, but I knew that our future lay in understanding American politics," Alfy Fanjul says. Today, the Dominican Republic has the largest foreign quota of sugar exported to the U.S.—17 percent—and, not surprisingly, the Fanjuls' Dominican subsidiary is the largest private exporter of Dominican sugar.

In the 90 cartons of material Tuddenham has accumulated in the Bygrave litigation, there are depositions from hundreds of former cane cutters alleging mistreatment in the fields. The Fanjuls' fields were run by farm managers whose job it was to meet a budget set at the beginning of the season. While I am with Alfy Fanjul, I read him an excerpt from one of the workers, Elvis Porter:

> Porter: "I work eight hours, and when I went in, I will see six hours and Code One which I don't—I never refuse."
>
> "What was Code One?"
>
> "Code One signify refuse."
>
> "Did you talk to your ticket writer?"
>
> "Yes . . . I asked him, 'Say boss, how did I get Code One today? I did not refuse.' He said, 'Don't worry about it.'"

Alfy Fanjul's face remains impassive. "From my point of view, none of this makes sense. The purpose of the program was an incentive." Then his voice changes and he declares, "I am convinced we didn't do anything wrong. . . . My conscience is totally clean." Jorge Dominicis, the Fanjuls' spokesman, interrupts him: "All of these workers have been coached." Fanjul nods agreement. He radiates a caudillo's lack of interest in the substance of what I have read him, as if Elvis Porter's testimony were beside the point.

"We believed for the West Indians it was the best job they could get," he tells me. "It made them middle-class in their countries."

Earlier, Klock had said, "Is it possible that some people were accidentally shorted? Yes. It's wrong. Did we say that we were going to pay them by the ton and then cheat them? No." As I leave, Dominicis brings in a small bag of sugar that sells for $1.60 in England—twice what it would sell for in America because of trade restrictions imposed by the European Union. "We wish we could get that kind of money for our sugar," Pepe Fanjul says.

Every November for nearly 50 years—from 1944 to 1993—about 10,000 workers arrived in South Florida from the Caribbean to harvest the cane. The season lasted until March, and the work was so dangerous that one in every three missed a day or more of work due to an injury. Some lost fingers and eyes. The mucky ground made machine-harvesting impractical, and until the last year of the program there were no time clocks in the fields. Under a formula that was supposed to comply with minimum-wage standards, the workers were paid not by the hour but by the task—or the amount of cane they cut on a row. Each day the price was determined by the foreman, who insisted that pricing the rows was highly subjective, and that it depended on how thick the cane was, how wet the ground was, how the cane grew in the field.

Jamaicans swore that their hours were routinely shorted by the ticket writers, who reported to the field bosses. Sometimes, they alleged in depositions, they were paid

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for only four hours when they had worked the entire day. Often the Jamaicans cut 10 or more tons of cane a day. "The row price should have been set high enough so that everyone would make the minimum wage," says Tuddenham, but thousands were paid as little as $25 a day, about half the minimum wage. However, whatever they made, it was much more than they could make at home. At the end of the season, a cane cutter could take back enough money to buy the cinder blocks for a house. From all over Jamaica, men flocked to Kingston every year hoping to pass the physical exams that would permit them to go to Florida and work for Big Sugar.

Dear Fatty,

How keeping? I hope all of you are well. I write you and send you $26. I don't know if you get it. . . . You wouldn't know what I'm going through. We get a cane row for $30. It takes 2 days to cut it. That works out to be some one dollar and some cents an hour. I spoke to the timekeeper . . . and he's ready to eat me up. He says we just have to work fast enough and then we'll make even more than the hourly wages they promised us. Imagine! To leave Jamaica, so many hundreds of miles, to come to America and work for one dollar and some cents an hour! Please, don't tell Claudette what I've written. I don't want her to worry, or think I'm coming home without anything.

—Letter from a Jamaican cane worker.

Before leaving Jamaica, the H-2 workers were handed a one-page contract which said that they would be paid by the task system. In order to obtain a temporary visa for a worker, the sugar companies were required to file a document called a "clearance order" with the Department of Labor. No worker ever saw the clearance order, but it contained a concise description of the job: A worker "would be expected to cut an average of 8 tons of harvest cane per day throughout the season." That simple sentence, and the fact that it can be interpreted in myriad ways, is the reason the Bygrave case has been going on for 12 years. Can the language of expectation—eight tons in eight hours—be interpreted as a worker's right to receive $5.30 (which was the hourly minimum wage) per ton? Eight tons is an immense amount of sugarcane—16,000 pounds of stalks that are 10 to 15 feet high. By comparison, harvesters at the Fanjul sugar farms in the Dominican Republic were paid about $1.50 per ton and cut two or three tons per day, according to *The Wall Street Journal.* Sometimes the workers in America would cut close to two tons of cane an hour. In those cases, Big Sugar's lawyers have argued, they were paid more. "We had an incentive system," Alfy Fanjul tells me. "The more they cut, the more we paid."

Klock says about the productivity standard, "No, no, no. The language of eight tons is language of expectation, not productivity requirements. . . . The Feds wanted us to write a description that was somewhere between reality and a worst-case scenario."

Edward Lazear, a Stanford economist who is considered a leading authority on pay systems, analyzed the records of scores of crews employed by the Fanjul companies. In many cases, whole crews were recorded as having worked only four-hour days; it was almost as if they were on strike. Lazear, who is an expert witness for Tuddenham, is so convinced by the evidence in the case that he has stopped taking money for his services. Joseph Klock says, "They say that the experts' game is a whore's game. You can probably get one to say anything."

Tuddenham believes workers should have been paid $5.30, the hourly minimum wage, for every ton of cane cut. He has calculated that the workers were in fact paid an average of about $3.70 a ton, and is adamant that the growers' budgets were designed to meet only that amount. That doesn't mean every worker every day, but over eight years, with 20,000 workers, the original lost-wages claim in the case was about $100 million.

Big Sugar's dark history of labor controversy has been investigated by congressional committees, by documentary-film makers such as Stephanie Black in *H-2 Worker* in 1990, and most vividly by Alec Wilkinson in *Big Sugar,* which first ran as a series of articles in *The New Yorker* in 1989. In the 1940s, the government brought charges against U.S. Sugar, accusing it of violating "the right and privilege of . . . citizens to be free from slavery"—an allegation not often made since the Civil War. The charges were dropped when a judge ruled that the jury had been illegally selected. Soon after that, sugar companies in Florida were given permission to import "guest workers" from the Caribbean for the cutting season. In 1973, Solomon Sugarman, then a Department of Labor wage-and-hour analyst, led a team investigating working conditions in the fields. He discovered, he tells me, "a pattern of flagrant labor violations."

Sugarman visited four growers and reported that at U.S. Sugar and the Sugar Cane Growers Cooperative the cutters were often counted as having started work 30 minutes later than their actual arrival time in the fields; similarly, there were examples of cutters quitting at 3:35 P.M. but being marked as having stopped cutting at 3. Sugarman reported that at the Sugar Cane Growers Cooperative the hours were issued "on the basis of satisfaction of the task." He discovered that at one company three ticket wri were in fact asleep on the buses that carr workers to the fields. "They knew the bos would change the tickets anyway." Sug man tells me. Sugarman's report, filed wh Nixon was president, had "incontroverti value" in "that it documented the shav of hours," according to Wilkinson. Sug man, like Tuddenham, quickly learned w happens when you take on Big Sugar. T Department of Agriculture, traditiona friendly to the sugar companies, soon issu its own report, exonerating Big Sugar.

In 1983, however, a congressional rep criticized Big Sugar's labor practices a pointed out that "foreign workers . . . can summarily dismissed and sent home, ne to return to the United States, for the slig est infraction or sign of organized prot over wages and working conditions."

April is the end of sugar-harvesting ti in Belle Glade. Located 90 minutes fr the mansions of Palm Beach, the town ce brates with Bake-Offs and a pageant for H vest Queen. Belle Glade is one of the poor communities in America. Edward R. Murr chose it for his 1964 documentary, *Harv of Shame,* and the Peace Corps used to se volunteers there to train. In the spring, the is often thick with smoke and ash, becau sugar farmers burn off the cane leaves in t fields. The smoke was the first thing th Sarah Cleveland noticed when she arrived 1994 to take a job as a lawyer at Flori Rural Legal Services—that and the alligat that would lurch out of canals and ponds the cane fields. The ash and the alligators a still noticeable five years later when Clevela and I visit Belle Glade together.

When Cleveland saw *Harvest of Shan* she says, "I was amazed at how similar t conditions were. If anything, it was wors because Murrow filmed white America farmworkers, and now Belle Glade had i migrants who could be deported with access to lawyers."

Touring the workers' barracks back th with her boss, Greg Schell, Cleveland sa signs posted: BEWARE OF LEGAL SERVICE THEY ARE NOT YOUR FRIENDS. Schell was c culating a newsletter explaining the wor ers' right to have lawyers. "Most of the worke were scared to take it," Cleveland recal "They refused to make eye contact." She w horrified by the squalor.

Cleveland had been a sophomore at Brow University when she learned about the cond tions in migrant farmwork. She was studyi the politics of the legal system with Profess Edward Beiser when a Danish photograph came through Providence with a slide sho he called "American Pictures," which showe the terrible state of America's underclas That slide show set Cleveland on a journe that would ultimately take her to Belle Glade

)4 to work for Schell, an expert on migrant-rker litigation and a brainy oddball with a ocious committment to farmworkers. In the ly years of his career, in Maryland in the e 80s, Schell had targeted the apple indus-, filing a class-action suit against the growers 10 were found to have underpaid apple pick-;—a case that foreshadowed *Bygrave*.

Schell did not have to look far to find Ed-)ward Tuddenham, who was then spending o weeks a month on a sofa in the Washing-n office of the Migrant Legal Action Pro-am, scouring migrant workers' contracts to lp legal-aid lawyers around the country. is specialty was the H-2 temporary-foreign-orkers program, and he was often on the ephone with lawyers from Idaho to Mary-nd. He was 36 and had complicated rela-nships with women; his girlfriends would ll the office to make sure that he really ed there. He used the office shower and dered dinner from the local takeout. ocused at that time on the apple growers the eastern states, he found a kindred irit in Schell, who had also gone to Har-rd and who had taken off in 1979 for the trus groves of Florida in a $300 car. The n of wheat farmers, Schell later said of mself that he had "the Peace Corps in his art" and remarkable moxie. Married to e daughter of a migrant worker whose fam-y had prospered sufficiently to run a camp r workers, he once even brought a lawsuit gainst his cousin for labor violations.

In Ronald Reagan's Washington, Schell nd Tuddenham were at war with the De-artment of Labor, which had backed away om a 10-year-old position on how work-s got paid—the productivity standard—and ded with growers on issues ranging from age rates to workmen's compensation. The epartment had been wrestling with this is-ue for years. When Jimmy Carter was in ne White House, his secretary of labor, Ray Marshall, fought for enforceable pay stan-ards for the guest-workers program. Mar-hall was from Louisiana and knew sugar-ane and farmwork; he was not fooled by hat he viewed as the smoke screens put up y the sugar companies. "They will make eople work forever and scared and hard, nd that is pretty much what they did any-ay," he recalls. During his tenure, he had oped to confront agriculture in a big way, ut he was warned that he could spend his ntire four years fighting just the sheep ranch-rs of Utah and Nevada—that's how power-il the agriculture lobby was. Marshall did y, however, to lobby for standards in South lorida, believing, he tells me, that the grow-rs should not be allowed to stand over the orkers and tell them, "'Unless you cut to is place in an hour, you are out of here. nd if you are out of here, you are out of ne country.' . . . You could blacklist them!"

For Marshall, the question in Florida was simple: "Should we require the American workforce to have to compete with people who are prime-working-age males who are forced by the circumstances to work scared and hard? And my answer is no. . . . I talked to the president, and he agreed. He said that he was opposed to the continuation of the foreign-workers program. Our Constitution does not do much to protect temporary workers." It was Marshall's intention in a second Carter administration to make the workers permanent residents, because he understood immigration history. "First you get the young, unmarried people, then you get families, then preachers and cooks. Once you get to that point, then you have a community."

The sugar companies soon figured out a way around the Labor Department's attempt to make sure that the piece rate—the number of bushels of apples picked or rows of cane cut—would conform to minimum-wage standards. They offered complex explanations for their pricing methods. "People had been asking this same question for 40 years: How were the fields priced? The sugar companies were masters of obfuscation," Tuddenham recalls. "You would think they were the Picassos of row pricing. They would say, 'We eyeball a row of cane and we just know: Fifty-five dollars a row! Sixty-three dollars a row!'"

Schell and Tuddenham determined that the apple pickers in nine states were being underpaid by as much as 40 percent, and they brought a class-action lawsuit in federal court on this issue. A Republican judge, Charles Richey, ruled in their favor and awarded the workers $5 million. Five years later he ruled again, this time against Big Sugar. In a scathing opinion, he wrote that the Department of Labor had bent over backward to avoid enforcing the productivity standard for sugar. A court of appeals concluded, however, that this was a matter for a state court, not a federal court, so from then on Tuddenham would have to wrestle with the legal machinery of Palm Beach County, in the very heart of the sugar belt.

Of all the lawyers Greg Schell could have found to assist him, Sarah Cleveland seemed an emissary of destiny. The daughter of a Birmingham Social Security judge who had clerked for Supreme Court justice Hugo Black during *Brown* v. *Board of Education*, and of a prima ballerina at the National Ballet of Washington, Cleveland had inherited her mother's willowy build and her father's passion for social justice. At Yale Law School, she was part of a group that filed a case on behalf of the Haitian boat people, which ultimately went to the Supreme Court. She spent hours on the telephone with Schell, who had come to New Haven to recruit for the Belle Glade office.

He had plenty to talk to her about. Six years earlier, a Fort Lauderdale reporter had called Schell to say, "Something bad is going down at Okeelanta. Something crazy." On November 22, 1986, a squad of Palm Beach County police in riot helmets with attack dogs had taken on a crew that refused to accept the pay conditions in the Fanjul fields. Some 100 cutters from St. Vincent had balked at the wages offered. As in all labor disputes, a liaison officer was called, but the two sides could not agree on a figure. The workers started to walk the eight miles back to the camp, and the next morning, still with no agreement, 40 of them refused to get on the bus. At that point the Okeelanta personnel manager called in the police. All in all, 384 workers, many of whom had had nothing to do with the argument in the fields, were deported. Cooks in the kitchen, cutters from other parts of the property—all were sent back to the islands. They were not even given time to gather their possessions. T-shirts and boom boxes were strewn all over the ground. "Some of the men had just completed the apple harvest," Schell later recalled, "and they had bought household goods to take home. All of it was left behind."

Reports of the "dog war," as it came to be called, drifted through the newsrooms and law schools of America. Sarah Cleveland was enraged when she heard of it in New Haven in 1990. By then she had spent two years at Oxford on a Rhodes scholarship, studying British colonial African and Indian history. The dog war conjured up 19th-century slaves, the workforce the original Spanish sugarcane planters had imported to Cuba. "It honed me in some way toward sugarcane and the plight of these workers," she later said.

Meanwhile, after their apple triumph in Judge Richey's court, Tuddenham and Schell had begun to zero in on the closed world of sugar. But when they attempted to speak to workers in the Florida camps, they were met by frightened stares.

The sugar companies tried to swat down the mounting attack on their labor practices by Tuddenham, Schell, and Jim Green, an American Civil Liberties Union lawyer in West Palm Beach. Tuddenham understood that they would need a Florida contract-law specialist to argue his tonnage claim in the state courts, but he began taking depositions at the Labor Department and searching for evidence of violations of labor law to back up his belief in the one-ton-per-hour pay standard. Tuddenham drove to West Virginia after Garry Geffert, a local lawyer, found two migrant workers, Canute Williams and Bernard Bygrave, who had cut cane in Florida. At last Tuddenham could spend hours hearing stories of what had actually gone on in the sugar fields. Williams and Bygrave would later testify about the hour

shorting, the lack of medical attention, the meager meals. Bygrave would become a class representative on the case, along with Williams and three others. Tuddenham would need hundreds more depositions, but he could not get near the fields. Jamaicans were shipped home on the last day of the harvest, and the sugar companies would not provide employee lists. "You could always tell the Jamaicans, because they were so terrified to talk to us," says Schell.

By 1989, Tuddenham had enlisted David Gorman, a graduate of Cornell Law School. A Vietnam veteran who rode a Harley and had no history of public-law work, Gorman was certainly not an idealist, but he happened to be a specialist in Florida contract law. "He understood it in two minutes," Tuddenham recalls. "Intellectually I thought it was interesting," Gorman says. "How many people that know the system here would have assumed that the cane cutters were well treated in the first place? I got involved because I believed that the tonnage agreement meant what it said, and because these were people who were disenfranchised and had no political clout and who got screwed."

At the first deposition, Gorman asked a U.S. Sugar manager, "How wide is a row of cane?" Tuddenham and Schell laughed at his naïveté, but, as Tuddenham now admits, "it turned out to be the key to the case. The answer was that you could measure a row by five-feet centers. The row of cane is only an inch or two wide. Then it is five feet to the next row." Gorman hypothesized that with this precise measure the tonnage of a field could be computed, and he believed he could prove that the sugar companies were violating the language of the clearance order. The question would remain whether the clearance order would hold up as a binding contract in court.

By the end of his first year, Gorman, like Tuddenham and Schell, was set on a path that would change the course of his life, and his motivation deepened as he became aware of how the sugar companies had maneuvered their way through the intricacies of government politics. The lawyers say they were astonished by the level of indifference the Departments of Labor and Agriculture displayed at the treatment of the foreign workers, and they were incensed over a strategy engineered in 1988 by the sugar companies. In 1986, the U.S. government began offering an amnesty that permitted an agricultural worker to get a green card if he had worked 90 days in the United States. Having a green card meant that a cane worker could opt to do construction work or pick apples instead and still remain in the country.

In response, concerned that they would lose their workforce, the sugar companies showed their political muscle in Washington by fighting for an exemption that would deprive their workers of green cards. Their argument was flimsy: they claimed that sugarcane was not "a perishable." At the Department of Agriculture, Al French, a labor consultant, weighed in on the final decision to exclude the cutters from the program. French, who is from South Florida, had a long relationship with the sugar growers. For years he had worked at the Florida Farm Bureau, and his father had been one of the original architects of the program to bring Bahamian workers to South Florida to work in the fields. In the 1960s, he had worked for the Management Research Institute, a farm-management consulting business run at the time by Rafael Fanjul, the uncle of Pepe and Alfy. French has always maintained that the charges against the growers were overstated. "I don't think the cutters have such bad labor conditions," he once told *The Wall Street Journal*.

This seemed to be one more case of connect-the-dots. Reporters soon theorized that the sugarcane-exemption order had come from the White House. "It was one of the most outrageous things they ever did," Tuddenham declares. "Workers who had worked all over agriculture were given green cards, and sugarcane workers weren't."

In the two years the amnesty program did apply to sugarcane workers, however, scores of them had managed to get other jobs with their temporary green cards, and that allowed them to remain in America. It was from these men that the first stories of what went on in the sugar fields began to trickle out of Palm Beach County, and among them was Bernard Bygrave, who had made his way to West Virginia to pick apples. Irate that their friends and families had been denied green cards or had been deported in the dog war, these former Big Sugar employees slowly began to talk.

Tuddenham, meanwhile, wrote letter after letter to the Departments of Labor and Agriculture, insisting that they had a responsibility to enforce the piece rate in sugar. The department heads would write back and say that the sugar companies used a task rate, not a piece rate. "What is the difference?" Tuddenham demanded, but he got nowhere until Richey ruled in his favor and said he should be able to depose the sugar companies to find out how cane workers were paid. This took almost two years. The team of lawyers allied against Big Sugar was now a loose confederation fighting a war on several fronts. Schell and Tuddenham sent out thousands of letters asking anyone who had worked in sugar to write to them, and soon hundreds of letters began to arrive, postmarked St. Lucia, Trinidad, Jamaica.

Dear Mr. Schell:

I received your letter. I knew we were being cheated. But I couldn't say anything because if I did they would say that I was smart or [that] I'm a ringleader to start a strike. So I just had to except their terms.

On several occasions I heard some of th workers ask the ticket writer for their 8 ho on the ticket and they were sent back hom If they didn't sent them back home them, next time. . . .

Another thing when you get sick or hur on the job you had to still work or the worker had to give the company the first 7 days free without pay.

After the 7 days was up, they paid you just $18 a day instead of the amount for 8 hours. Sometimes we worked up to 12 hou and we only got $18 for it.

Whenever you get cut, you go to the doctor, get it stitched and 2 days afterward you have to go back to work not matter ho bad the cut was. . . . This is only a few thin that went wrong. . . .

—Letter from a Jamaican cane cut

From the beginning of *Bygrave*, Edwa Tuddenham had a problem: he had ticket writers who would come forward a confirm shorting in the field. "At that ti the ticket writers were still working for Sugar and wouldn't tell us the truth," G Schell tells me. "After they mechanized t fields, it was 'let my people go' time."

They therefore made a decision that timately put the case at risk: Tuddenha would fight the sugar companies with co tract law. Sifting through the archives sto room of the legal-aid office, he discovered letter written in 1972 by Fred Sikes, of t Florida Sugar Producers Association. was," he says now, "the 'Eureka!' momen Sikes's letter, written to the Department Labor, said, "We will require all cutters produce approximately one ton of cane p hour."

But in depositions, no one would adm to using a standard of tons in the field. "N matter how many times you would ask, y could never get a straight answer," says Tu denham. So he shifted his focus and the rized that the mills were the center of t operation. "We have to feed the mill," o official told him. "And that means we ne a certain number of tons every single da That was better than nothing, but still it w pretty weak. The growers, however, were b ginning to get a sense of how dogged Tu denham and his group were.

Back in 1988, Tuddenham had been sta tled to get a phone call from Edward Fou tain, a former supervisor at U.S. Suga Fountain had moved to North Carolina b had taken with him documents which, Tu denham recalls, "basically confirmed wh we were piecing together. It was a tonnag

sed system. He kept meticulous records. hat the estimates were. The cane that was rned. What the actual tonnage turned out be. He claims to have been told: You have stay ahead of the workers. You are supsed to be getting more tons than you are ying for." "I even showed proof where they re shorting," Fountain tells me. "In one ar, my crew was shorted 11,000 tons. It akes me mad—$50,000 would have made ch a difference in their lives. The sugar mpanies are all the same." Fountain evenally decided to give Tuddenham an affivit. "He was an Anglo from Belle Glade cking his neck out for a black Jamaican," iddenham says. "Never in your wildest eams would you have imagined that."

Contract law is a fundamental of Western mocracies, but the argument made by Tudnham and Gorman would seem contradicry to almost any jury: *The document that worker saw is nonetheless legally binding.* dges, however, are used to dealing with mplicated legal parlance, and in August 92, Judge Lucy Brown ruled in the *Byave* case that Tuddenham and Gorman's),000 clients were owed $51 million in lost ages. Three years later, a Florida appeals urt reversed Brown's decision, saying that e facts were in dispute, and eventually *Byave* was divided into five separate cases.

The potential testimony from cane cutters jury trials could have become a publications catastrophe for U.S. Sugar, and in 98 the company settled the case and paid e cutters $5.1 million.

As Tuddenham and Gorman prepared to fight *Bygrave* in the state courts, they oped that the administration of Bill Clinn would remove the legal stalemate they ere confronted with at the Department of abor. "If they had said it was a productivity standard, it would have been the end f everything. We would have won," Tudenham says. Although the standard was ot enforced, all through the Reagan admintration and most of the Bush administraon the Department of Labor had made its osition clear: the eight-ton statement was a roductivity standard. Additionally, in a sepate ruling, an administrative judge said that .S. Sugar did in fact pay by the ton, and iat the eight tons was a productivity stanard. As soon as *Bygrave* was filed in 1989, owever, the Department of Labor, accordg to Tuddenham, "got second thoughts. hen Clinton is elected. We think, Oh great! he secretary of labor under the last Demoratic president was Ray Marshall. He had een consulting at the White House. We ought, Fabulous!" Tuddenham got Marall to work on the case, and, like Lazear arlier, Marshall worked pro bono.

Marshall went to Clinton's secretary of labor, Robert Reich, and got, he tells me, the cold wind that blew from the sugar lobby of the early Clinton years. "I am looking at this issue," Reich told him at a meeting, but, Marshall recalls, "the impression I got was that he was not looking at it." Marshall's intuition, based on his own years at the Labor Department, was that Reich had been sandbagged by his staff or by the White House. "There was no pressure from the White House," Reich tells me. "I did not get involved in legal cases. And if I thought that a sugar company was putting pressure on us, I would have hit them harder." In his memoir, however, Reich is sharply critical of the swirl of soft money that tainted the Clinton White House. He does not mention the Fanjuls, but in the 1992 election cycle, Big Sugar donated $1.2 million to Democratic candidates.

At Steel, Hector & Davis in Miami, Elizabeth du Fresne attempted to talk sense into Greg Schell as a step toward settling all the sugar cases weighing down her desk. Du Fresne, the daughter of a citrus grower, worked with Joseph Klock, and the two considered Schell, Gorman, and Tuddenham one grand annoyance. Du Fresne, who had started her career at Florida Rural Legal Services, had once even written a brief attempting to get lawyers into the camps. However, since her idealistic days at Vanderbilt University, when she dreamed of working with her idol, Edward R. Murrow, on *The Voice of America,* she had moved on to being a litigator and eventually representing the Fanjuls. Du Fresne, a pragmatist who has made *The National Law Journal*'s best-trial-lawyers list, is voluble and likes to show off a jawbreaker aquamarine-and-diamond ring she bought when she won a $222.5 million settlement for Florida Power & Light. (Ironically, in that case she was pitted against Fanjul affiliates.)

"In the 1980s, the Fanjuls had a theory: You don't suck up to the media," du Fresne tells me. "U.S. Sugar had a different, go-out-and-suck-their-ass approach." Du Fresne looked down the years that she would have to fight with Schell in court and finally decided to attempt a solution. "Everyone was painted with the same brush, and it was a brush that came from the 1960s," she says. Since Schell and Tuddenham had started their separate campaigns, du Fresne had been fending off a dozen cases under four umbrella suits. One of them, a wage-claim case concerning guaranteed payments at Okeelanta, was already at the court of appeals; transportation cases, improper-wages cases, and the dog-war case were all grinding through the system. Hovering over Schell's load was the Bygrave case, which had just been reversed in the appellate court. "I am targeting the sugar industry," Schell had told her on the telephone. In a spirit of conciliation, du Fresne decided to get together with him. "I said to Joe and Alfy, 'Let me meet with him. I am ex-legal-services. We want better conditions, they want better conditions. Let me see if I can straighten this out.'"

She drove to West Palm Beach on a Saturday. "I said, 'Greg, at the current cost of defending these lawsuits, the choice will be made very soon. The cost of defending pointless lawsuits will make our decision to mechanize an easy one.' He said, 'I don't care. You have brought in foreign laborers and exploited them. When you do that, all you do is depress the market for American workers. If you mechanize, you mechanize. I don't believe you ever will. You like the system too much.'" As Schell recalls it, "At one point when we were arguing—maybe that day, maybe on the telephone—I said to Elizabeth, 'You know, it is so interesting what money will do.'"

Du Fresne drove back to Miami. "I don't think we are ever going to be successful with him," she told the Fanjuls. "I think we have to choose our battles. The ones that are going to cost more to fight, I think we will have to mediate."

Du Fresne especially wanted to settle *Bygrave,* and she set up a mediation with David Gorman. Both lawyers call the day and a half of wrangling "a fiasco." "At the end of it, I asked David Gorman in the hall if he would settle for $7 million. That would have been a bargain, considering what this case ultimately cost," says du Fresne. Gorman said no.

"We always knew whoever settled *Bygrave* first would settle cheap, and it would be a war chest for Tuddenham and Gorman," said du Fresne later of U.S. Sugar's $5.1 million settlement of the Bygrave litigation. Du Fresne went to see Alfy Fanjul. "I said, 'Why don't we settle first? It will be a lot cheaper than going to trial.' He said, 'Did we do anything wrong?' I said, 'This is a bullshit case. You did not do anything wrong.' He said, 'How much is it going to cost to defend it? If we did not do anything, I would prefer not to settle, but I am a rational businessperson.'"

Lawyers often trade stories of sprawling civil actions, cases such as Motorola and IBM, that stretch on for years. The standard for public-interest law has always been the Attica case, filed in 1974 to collect damages for inmates harmed as a result of a riot at a prison in upstate New York. As with *Bygrave,* the basis of it was the treatment of an underclass. Joseph Klock and his colleagues at Steel, Hector & Davis now refer to Edward Tuddenham as "Schlichtmann," comparing his doggedness for the cane workers to Jan Schlichtmann's campaign against W. R. Grace for the toxic waste that led to leukemia and death for several children in Woburn, Massachusetts—the basis of Jonathan Harr's compelling book, *A Civil Action.* "I read *A Civil Action* for the first time just before the Atlantic trial," Tuddenham

says, "and I got so ill from it and what happened to Schlichtmann that I did not get out of bed for two days." Tuddenham identified completely with the "small motions, loss of evidence being allowed, slippages and erosions in the legal system which prevented justice in the case."

According to Peter Edelman, professor of law at Georgetown Law School, the concept of making social policy through the courts has changed. "The original romantic idea was that you could go into court and put the Constitution down on the desk in front of the judge," says Edelman. In fact, he continues, this was never true. Edelman uses the nearly 20-year court history of *Brown* v. *Board of Education* to demonstrate the need for public-interest lawyers to be as diligent concerning public policy and media strategy as the most gifted litigators. Would *Brown* have gotten through the courts of today? The courts have already made constitutional adjustments—segregation has ended, legislatures have been re-apportioned—and the number of wins you can have using the Constitution has narrowed. According to a recent survey, 34 percent of Americans believe that federal judges are biased against the poor. "And that statistic is much greater in state court," Edelman says.

Since the Reagan administration, the Republicans have attacked federal funding for legal-aid services, an initiative led by agribusiness because of the numerous farmworker cases around the country. Before Newt Gingrich became Speaker of the House of Representatives in 1995, the American Bar Association had always been able to protect legal-services funding. "After Gingrich took over, that was the first time they had enough of a majority to do this slash-and-burn kind of change," Edelman says, citing the passing in 1996 of an onerous law which prevented legal services from filing class-action lawsuits of any kind, and from taking cases dealing with abortion or welfare. Now these cases all have to be privately funded, mostly through foundation grants.

"It is difficult to get cases through the courts, but every year from the law schools I get hundreds of remarkably gifted graduates to do this kind of work," says Susan Plum, who oversees the Skadden Arps law firm's public-interest fellowships. Still, Edelman sees a major shift in values since the 1960s, when Ralph Nader, Thurgood Marshall, and his own wife, Marian Wright Edelman, inspired a generation. "Now the money is not there for this kind of work, the courts are not as receptive, but it is not a change from the clear light of sunshine to the dark of storm. It is more gradual, but it is definitely there. . . . What I teach is that you have to be three-dimensional. There is no gold standard and never was."

When Sarah Cleveland arrived in Belle Glade in 1994, she viewed her time there as a sort of Peace Corps experience. She had spent the previous two years in elite clerkships, working under Washington federal judge Louis Oberdorfer and then for Supreme Court justice Harry Blackmun. Her view of Blackmun was as reverential as her father's had once been of Hugo Black. Just after she passed the bar, she was at the Supreme Court to observe the arguments on her case protesting the deportation of the Haitian boat people. "Have you ever been to Haiti? Haven't you ever read Graham Greene's *The Comedians*?" Blackmun demanded of a government lawyer. At that moment Cleveland, who had won a Skadden fellowship to work in Belle Glade, decided to delay going there in order to clerk for Blackmun.

Once she got to Florida, she was marooned in a storefront with no lawbooks; for all her research she had to drive to Fort Lauderdale to the law library at Nova Southeastern University. Belle Glade was filled with empty apartments, but as soon as she mentioned that she was a lawyer working for Florida Rural Legal Services, the vacancy signs disappeared. Finally she found a garage apartment owned by a Palestinian merchant.

"Here are your cases," Schell told her, and handed her the fallout litigation from the dog war, which had happened when Cleveland was still at Brown. Called *Malcolm* v. *Okeelanta,* it consisted of claims made against Okeelanta by 355 workers seeking damages for lost jobs and possessions. It had been filed late by a legal-aid office that was overwhelmed by the number of plaintiffs, so the major wage claim had exceeded the statute of limitations. "The young lawyers were trying to think of every legal theory they could," Schell recalls. "Finally, I just filed the damned thing so we wouldn't lose it all."

Cleveland was soon supervising three cases, including the claims of the 355 men deported during the dog war, and she began to comprehend the massive litigation history of the Fanjuls. The office kept a file of news stories of suits filed against them, brought by everyone from partners in their growers' cooperative to Everglades conservation groups. "Everyone who does business with the Fanjuls winds up suing them," Schell says. "It's nonsense," says Joseph Klock, who was galled by the public reaction to the dog war, claiming it "was only an incident after the fact, as it was replayed in the press." Schell had informed the Fanjuls he wanted the wrongly deported workers to get their jobs back. "They never called me back," he says, and they were adamant that they would not settle the claims. "There is no question we mishandled the dog war," Alfy Fanjul t me, "and I am sorry that it was handled t way." "Did it ever occur to you to investig what in fact happened at Okeelanta?" I him. "I spoke with the farm manager a the lawyers," he says. In the end, for all reporters and lawyers who made their to Belle Glade, the dog war became emble atic of migrant workers' troubles in the F juls' sugar fields.

One day Schell turned to Cleveland a said, "We are deposing the labor-divis head of the Florida Fruit and Vegetable sociation in our Bygrave litigation. Edw Tuddenham is coming to do it. You ought drive over to Orlando to hear him." As and Tuddenham walked out of court toge er, Cleveland remembers, "I looked at h and I thought, You are so much like m He was 44 years old and engaged to anot woman, but that day he asked Clevelan fly to Washington and do research at the preme Court Library while he and Gorm were taking depositions.

Tuddenham was then living in Aust where he worked in a small law firm. sent Sarah his favorite novel, Vladimir N bokov's *Ada,* and she sent him Zora Ne Hurston's memoir of her childhood in Be Glade. Love letters followed, but the roma progressed slowly. Two years later, Sara father took her aside and told her that m who wait until they are 46 to get marri rarely do. Susan Plum told Cleveland in course of a phone call that she had rece ly taken another Skadden fellow "diamo shopping." When Cleveland told Tudde ham about the call, he said, "We could that, too." Six months later, on a trip to maica to take depositions, they were m ried on a sugar plantation near Montego B

In April 1999, Tuddenham and Gorm were standing in the hallway of the co in Palm Beach when they suddenly look down and saw a long black limo. "He comes Willie," said Tuddenham. "You co see the front of the car about five minu before you could see the back end," adds today. The appearance of Willie Ga startled Tuddenham. The son of migra farmers, Gary regularly reminds reporte that he picked corn in grade school. Tod he lives in a 50-room mansion in Stuart, hour north of Palm Beach, and flies arou the country in his own Gulfstream II, t *Wings of Justice,* pursuing a lucrative p sonal-injury practice. Gary, who has tw Bentleys, wears $3,000 suits and custo made crocodile shoes. One day in court explains his theory of lawyering to me: "It 15 percent what a jury hears and 85 perce what a jury sees." He arrives in court wi stacks of elaborate printed posters on M sonite boards.

Gary is a courtroom spellbinder, a shrewdy
o understands the first basic truth of
dern jury trials—the importance of spin.
wrote letters to Gorman saying that he
d spoken to "Jamaicans involved in these
tters," who told him they felt "nothing
t the highest regard" for the Fanjuls. In-
sed that Gary might have violated a
ge's orders by speaking with members of
class action, Gorman asked Gary for a
of the workers he had spoken to. In re-
onse, Gary called Gorman's office and
d his secretary that he had spoken to only
o Okeelanta employees, neither of whom
s a class member. This was the begin-
g of Gorman's education in the dramat-
style of Willie Gary.

Du Fresne had understood only too well
at it would take to sucker-punch the Ivy
ague lawyers in a Palm Beach County
urt. "There was no way I was going to face
wn a jury trying to argue against thou-
nds of poor black Jamaicans without a
ack lawyer," she informs me. Gary took
e look at the complicated tables of num-
rs on the tonnage issue and anticipated
easy win. "This is all that they have?" he
ked du Fresne.

As we were sitting in the courtroom one day, Joseph Klock jotted in my note-ook: "This ridiculous case is a perfect four-rt syllogism: A equals B, B equals C, A uals C. God is love, love is blind, Ray harles is blind, Ray Charles is God. That Edward and David's case. You are expect- to cut eight tons of cane a day, therefore u are entitled to be paid by the ton. There-re, you will be paid the hourly rate by the n. It makes no sense."

There was, however, plenty of evidence at did make sense. It seemed that the orkers were being paid by the ton because e company budgeted each field by the ton. orman and Tuddenham provided a clus- r of witnesses who testified how the fields ere priced and how they were divided by ws and tonnage. Each year Atlantic and keelanta hit their budget estimates, no atter what. One witness after another tes- ied that their hours had been cut by tick- writers in order to make their hourly ages appear higher. Du Fresne and Gary verwhelmed the plaintiffs with Cuban cket writers and black farm managers who enied shaving hours. "We are the preach- and the teacher," du Fresne said playful- Gary, sensing the jury's frustration with e legal minutiae and semantics, held up one point in his final argument an elabo- tely printed trial board that read, THIS IS FRIVOLOUS LAWSUIT. Then he held up an- ther, of Lady Justice in Day-Glo green, nd announced, "I want to introduce you a lady." For all of Gary's theatrics, it was u Fresne who came up with the clinching

CREDITS

FASHION

Cover: For **Keanu Reeves's** Helmut Lang shirt and suit, go to www.helmutlang.com.
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Page 38: See credits for cover.
Page 46: Maureen Orth styled by Jacqui Lefton for Susan Price, Inc.; shirt by Clements Ribeiro, from Barneys New York.
Page 63: Guy Ritchie's and **Matthew Vaughn's** Holland & Holland clothing from Holland & Holland, London; Miranda Robson for ESP.
Page 99: Shannyn Sossamon's Ossie Clark top from Decades, L.A.; Lisa Michelle for Luxe.
Pages 108–9: Keanu Reeves's Versace clothing and accessories from Versace boutiques worldwide.
Page 110: Costume National Homme shirt from Costume National, N.Y.C.
Pages 112–13: Versace clothing from Versace boutiques worldwide.
Pages 140–41: For **Lara Flynn Boyle's** Cartier watch, call 1-800-CARTIER; Edward Jowdy for Art Partner.
Page 143: Roberto Cavalli swimsuit from Roberto Cavalli, N.Y.C.; Giuseppe Zanotti shoes from Diavolina, L.A.; Yves Saint Laurent necklace from the Paper Bag Princess, L.A.

BEAUTY AND GROOMING

Cover and page 38: Michael Boadi and Val Garland, both for Untitled; manicure by Gina Viviano for Cloutier.
Page 46: Maureen Orth's hair and makeup by Assumpta Clohessy for Susan Price, Inc.
Page 63: Guy Ritchie's and **Matthew Vaughn's** grooming by Jackie Hamilton-Smith for Untitled/Calvin Klein.
Page 90: Richard Cooley for Utopia.
Page 99: Ray Allington for Magnet L.A.; Kara Yoshimoto for Artists by Timothy Priano.
Pages 108–13: Damien Boissinot at Olga; manicure by Gina Viviano.
Pages 140–41: Ken Paves for Art Mix; Francesca Tolot for Cloutier/I Nuovi; Galynne Duly for Artists by Timothy Priano.
Pages 144–57: Hair by Maury Hopson; makeup by Gucci Westman.
Page 184: Julian Schnabel's grooming by Rheanne White for Artists by Timothy Priano.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND MISCELLANY

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Page 102: By John Abbott (Welch), Corina Lecca (cardigan).
Page 104: By Bill Aron/PhotoEdit/PictureQuest (Ritalin), Joe Atlas/Artville/PictureQuest (nail polish), from Corbis (bomb), from C Squared Studios/PictureQuest (ice cream), by T. J. Florian/Rainbow/PictureQuest (labs), Barry King/Liaison Agency (Eminem), Rony Lutz/Saab (Saab), Coco McCoy/Rainbow/PictureQuest (sheep, sundial), Henry McGee/Globe Photos (DiFranco), from Monogram Pictures/Archive Photos (Plath), by Hank Morgan/Rainbow/PictureQuest (peppers), from PhotoDisc/PictureQuest (on-line), by Andrea Renault/Globe Photos (Ellis), from Reuters NewMedia/Corbis (Bezos), by Jim Smeal/Ron Galella, Ltd. (McBeal), John Spellman/Retna (Clinton), from VDL/Star File Photo (*Raymond*), from the Wood River Gallery/PictureQuest (beer, phone).
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Pages 116–17: Inset from *The Miami Herald.*
Pages 118–19: All, excluding bottom right, courtesy of Florida Crystals.
Pages 120–21: Inset from *The Palm Beach Post.*
Pages 122–23: Large photograph from Stills/Retna. Insets: left, from Sipa Press; right, from Rex Features.
Page 124: From Gamma (palace, pregnant), from Hulton/Archive Photos (premiere), from Globe Photos (1995).
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argument for the Fanjuls. The workers had a contract they had agreed to: They were paid by the row. Did anyone ever tell them that they were being paid by the ton? They called farm managers, former ticket writers, and company lawyers, who all said no, no one had ever told them they were being paid by the ton.

Du Fresne was convinced that her most compelling witness was the government representative from the West Indies who had worked out the laborers' contract. "They had never negotiated a contract in tonnage," du Fresne said. Despite the cane cutters' accounts of the grueling conditions in the fields, the heart of the matter was that it was a contract action. "People promise to do things in a contract. The Fanjuls hadn't promised anything they didn't do."

Judge Edward Fine's instructions to the jury were a puzzle: Did the contract require the Atlantic Sugar Association to pay a minimum of $5.30 for each ton? There was no reference in the judge's instructions as to what might have been Atlantic's actual budgeting plan. The jury was to focus on the intentions of the company, not on the tonnage-based theory of the plaintiff. Gorman and Tuddenham were convinced that the jury instructions were stacked against them. "Did they intend to pay them $5.30 a ton?" asked Gorman. "No, they had budgeted $4 a ton. We knew that. On the other side, you have the cutters; did they intend to get, or expect to get, $5.30 a ton? No. They did not know that the document that required it existed. If you had said to these guys, 'Come to the United States and we will pay you $3 an hour,' they would have said, 'Fine!' For $2 an hour they would be there!"

Roger Gamblin, the jury foreman, later said that he had been "irritated" by the judge's instructions, wondering more than once, Why have we been here for a month? He believed, he said, that the judge had decided the case. Gamblin, who owns a title company, had no problem understanding the charts and graphs of the cutters' case. He would later actually consult Gorman on a contract matter, he was so impressed with him in court. Inside the jury room, Gamblin said to the other jurors, "Did the company cheat the workers?" They said yes. The instructions from the judge, however, were clear. They had to decide whether the company had intended to pay the workers what it did. That was all. "It was clear that the incentive system was a moving benchmark," he tells me. "I don't use the word 'fraud,' but there was no level playing field for the workers."

When the jurors returned to the courtroom, one woman was crying. The foreman asked the judge to read an unusual statement, which would later be reported in the *Palm Beach Post*.

Atlantic Sugar consistently misrepresented to the cutters the incentive features of their task system of payment. It was shameful.

However, the scope of the verdict form presented to us by the court was limited to a single issue--"Does the contract require Atlantic to pay plaintiffs a minimum task rate of $5.30 per ton of harvest cane?"

This case was not frivolous.

A few miles from the courthouse, in the neighborhood known as Little Guatemala, a former cane cutter named Michael Cameron lives in a single room attached to a family's larger room in a dilapidated boardinghouse. He has no telephone, and it takes him some time to come to the door. He peers out, unsure whether to speak to me. It is a steamy April night, and he is in his underwear, but he quickly pulls on a pair of shorts. Ascertaining that I am not a lawyer or a cop, he agrees to come out and talk in the car.

Cameron, who was known as Big Mike at Okeelanta, was one of the fastest workers, sometimes cutting 20 tons in a single day. Arriving in Florida at age 21, he considered himself lucky just to get hired. That was, he said, "better than yard," the Jamaican expression meaning no work. "Gentlemen, if it were easy, you would not be here," the supervisor told the workers on their first day at Okeelanta.

I ask Cameron what he would say to Alfy Fanjul if he were sitting in the car with us. "I would say to him that he hides from his dirty work. They try to pat you on the shoulder in order to get you to kill the other guy.... Most of their guys in the field are the lead men and the ticket writers. They take them 'off the knife.' They know that cutting cane is very hard, so they try to work on the boss's side. The boss tell them to cheat us, and they say, 'I have to do my job, man. I have to get away from the slavery.' ... I have seen men working for 30-odd years on the contract. That man is old and shaky. He cannot get up the row as fast as he could.... They use the term 'car faster than car'—that man is old, I am young, faster than him.

"I have seen young guys who have never cut cane before.... I see guys crying and giving blood and coming out of the field crying because he has nothing on his check.... I have seen guys injured, got cut, and their back pulled out. I have seen them sent home with nothing....

"Nothing lasts forever. And someday those billionaires are going to die, and they are not going to be able to carry a cent with them. Everyone is going to atone for what he done!"

"I am shocked," says Joseph Klock[illegible] response. "The longevity of employment[illegible] lationships at Alfy and Pepe's compar[illegible] contradicts that."

After the Atlantic defeat, Tuddenha[illegible] Austin partners met him with icy [illegible] noyance. "I told them, 'This is the *Titan*[illegible] I can't abandon ship now. But the reality[illegible] we are partners. Do you want to get on [illegible] lifeboat?'" He recalls one partner, whom[illegible] had brought to the firm, saying, "Isn't it ti[illegible] to give up? You've done enough! I have k[illegible] and I have a husband who hates this case. I[illegible] 10 years!" Tuddenham simply handed th[illegible] an estimate of projected expenses—$100,0[illegible] to mount the appeal. Then he moved his [illegible] fice to the dining-room table at his house[illegible] South Austin, where he had started grow[illegible] a row of sugarcane in the backyard.

His wife, Sarah, now a professor at [illegible] University of Texas School of Law, worked [illegible] briefs while she obtained tenure, aware th[illegible] an increase in her salary would help to fu[illegible] *Bygrave*. It was May 1999, and they had o[illegible] four months until the next scheduled tr[illegible] against another Fanjul company, Okeelan[illegible]

A few weeks later, Tuddenham and Cle[illegible] land are in Jamaica on a fervid search [illegible] new witnesses to carry the October trial. Th[illegible] have a promising lead, a former ticket wri[illegible] named Glenord Gordon, who worked [illegible] Okeelanta. A cane cutter named Adolph[illegible] Gordon, who is not related to Glenord, h[illegible] already agreed to testify, but Glenord G[illegible] don, as a ticket writer, would have far grea[illegible] impact. Schell has told them that Gord[illegible] speaks without the thick Jamaican acce[illegible] that American juries have trouble und[illegible] standing, but there is no guarantee that th[illegible] will find him. The district of Barbary Ha[illegible] where Gordon lives, has no telephone s[illegible] vice, and mail is delivered only once a wee[illegible] There are no road signs, no roads, and d[illegible] trails cut through the bromeliad forests.

It is the monsoon season. Mosquitoes a[illegible] swarming, the beaches are deserted. The m[illegible] of Jamaica on Cleveland's knees is crumpl[illegible] from the humidity. At one hamlet, a Jam[illegible] can comes out of a shed with a tin roof a[illegible] cinder-block walls to show us a silver m[illegible] chete he earned at the Sugar Cane Growe[illegible] Cooperative when he cut more cane tha[illegible] anyone else in his crew. "Is this case still n[illegible] won?" he asks Tuddenham. "Not yet," Tu[illegible] denham says. "Are the jobs coming back[illegible] "I am afraid not," he says, "but we are figh[illegible] ing to get you some of what you are owed[illegible] The cane cutter is silent. He has no wo[illegible] and is clearly desperately poor.

The next day, Tuddenham and Clevela[illegible] find the man they've traveled so far to se[illegible] "Are you Glenord Gordon?" Tuddenha[illegible] asks. Gordon, who is middle-aged, is at hom[illegible] waiting out a torrential rainstorm, with h[illegible] children around him. To describe his dealin[illegible]

he farm manager, he uses the phrase
: on the knife," the same language
iel Cameron used. "Back on the knife"
s returning to cutting up to 10 tons of
:ane a day and risking the loss of an eye
)e because you have to work fast or be
ted. "The men were complaining that
robbing them of hours, and that all of
ket writers were robbing them of hours,"
/s. "I told them that's what we had to
id that we did not have any choice. . . .
ompany definitely knew that the hours
being cut. They had to know, because
day the men would be out there work-
9, 10 hours per day. . . . The men often
ed more than eight hours, but they
never paid for more than eight hours."
ord Gordon says he is willing to testify,
Tuddenham brings him to Palm Beach
e the stand in *Bygrave* v. *Okeelanta.*

inting his finger at Adolphus Gordon
n the last day of the trial in October
Willie Gary tells the jury, "He lied to
I don't mean to offend anybody by us-
ie word 'lie,' but I don't know any oth-
y to put it." The trial has begun on a
re note, with Gorman and Tuddenham
ng for a verdict against themselves.
judge's instructions were not chang-
Why spend weeks going through a case
vould lead to a train wreck?" says Tud-
am. Judge Edward Fine is not amused,
ules against them. Time after time, de-
Tuddenham's and Gorman's objections,
idge allows Gary to accuse Adolphus
ion of perjury—of telling "whoppers."
e lunch break, I follow Glenord Gor-
out of the courtroom, and he tells me,
anted to go home. I know what this
is like. There is no way they are going
le for a black man from Jamaica."
espite Gordon's testimony, once again a
is unmoved by the meticulous presenta-
by Tuddenham and Gorman of charts
graphs. Michael Cameron even takes the
l and testifies that sometimes he didn't
er to ask what he was being paid on the
"I didn't want the heartbreak," he says.
weeks of expert testimony on both
, the jury comes back in four hours, find-
or the Fanjuls. *The National Law Journal*
ater cite *Bygrave* v. *Atlantic* as one of the
significant defense wins of the year.

Have you ever cut sugarcane?" I ask Alfy Fanjul the last time we are to-
er. He has invited me to lunch on the
and is in high spirits after his second
t win in the long-running Bygrave
tion. "I have cut cane, and it was so
al I couldn't last 20 minutes," he says,
hing. "I had just come to Florida, and
farm manager wanted me to under-
d what this was. I thought I was going
ave a heart attack." We are seated at lunch, and Fanjul's steward is serving us pasta.

From where we sit, I can see the other yachts in the marina and the causeway leading to West Palm Beach. It is easy to understand how Alfy and Pepe Fanjul inspired Carl Hiaasen's creation of the Cuban sugar-baron brothers, the Rojos, in *Strip Tease.* This characterization so vexed the Fanjuls that Jorge Dominicis once drove five hours to Hiaasen's retreat in the Keys to demand of him whether in fact Pepe and Alfy were the models for the Rojos. "Why, Jorge," Hiaasen said, "the Rojos are an invention of my sick and perverted mind."

I ask Fanjul if he believes he has any residual moral obligation to the thousands of cutters who once worked in his fields. Would he ever consider a bold public-relations move such as setting up an educational fund for the children of the cutters? Fanjul looks at me oddly. "Why would I do that?" he asks. "We give a lot of money to charity." I mention that it might be good for his image, and talk a bit about James Burke of Johnson & Johnson, who once stripped store shelves of all Tylenol because of tampering. "You have won the cases so far, but all these hundreds of depositions and your first jury indicate that something went wrong in those fields. Wouldn't it be small change to you to give a few million dollars as a goodwill gesture?" Fanjul smiles but says nothing. "Do you reject that idea?" I ask. "I reject the idea," he says.

For hours after I leave the *Crili,* I think about Alfy Fanjul's response, which was totally authentic and consistent with his position from the moment he set up in the Everglades. Fanjul truly believes he gave 20,000 Jamaicans an opportunity to make money in America, and he does not for a moment accept that he has done anything wrong. From Fanjul's point of view, Michael Cameron and hundreds of other former cane cutters now have green cards and live in America, while 20,000 other cutters live in squalor without jobs on the islands.

Edward Tuddenham, ever standing on principle, is just as convinced that his efforts are well placed. "Is it possible that you will spend the rest of your life working on this case?" I ask him one night in Jamaica. We are sitting outside under a full moon, and he waits a long time to answer. "Yes," he says.

On a rainy morning this past December, Tuddenham awakened early in Austin to listen to Joseph Klock and Laurence Tribe argue in front of the U.S. Supreme Court over the Florida recount. The night before, he had been up late rereading *Moby Dick,* and after thinking for so many years that Captain Ahab was evil, he was surprised that he now identified with Ahab's obsession. "Someone has to try for the whale," he said to his wife, Sarah Cleveland. Six months pregnant, she had just been named professor of the year at the University of Texas law school, where she teaches civil procedure. One of the cases she uses is Edward's 1980 battle with the onion growers of Hereford, Texas. Cleveland is appalled by the fact that in class discussions many of her students side with the growers. Listening to Klock tangle with Justice Scalia, Tuddenham was struck with another irony; he felt a surprising affection for his longtime adversary and experienced a certain wistfulness thinking about the passage of time. Laurence Tribe, who was arguing for Gore, had been Tuddenham's professor at Harvard Law. "It is as if every piece of my life is suddenly aligned. I thought, Here is the family arguing again," he told me. Still ahead of Tuddenham are two more Bygrave cases to try, and he is waiting for the Florida appeals court to rule on his Okeelanta defeat; the Atlantic decision went against him. Listening to the arguments in the Supreme Court, he looked around his living room, at an antique map of Jamaica and his collection of 19th-century photographs of sugarcane cutters, and he was overwhelmed. "The sugar companies are unbelievably powerful. Joe Klock has unbelievable power," he said. "Reconciling one's faith in the system is a difficult and ongoing task. . . . Call me Ahab." □



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Michael Lutin tells Aquarians to go on the lam



AQUARIUS JAN. 20 FEB. 18

Norman Mailer

Achieving a degree of patience and accepting a state of confinement are certainly no simple tasks for a wildly free (and driven) spirit like you, especially now, with Uranus transiting your sign. Although you are honestly trying to behave, you cannot seem to knuckle under completely to anyone's authority, even if you know that by doing so you might conceivably save yourself from ruin. Once in a while, however, it's smart to retreat and dare to allow yourself to fulfill your long-hidden fantasies of running away, hiding out, and going undercover.



Mercedes Ruehl

PISCES FEB. 19–MARCH 20

Why on earth you continue to struggle to become part of a group you'll never really belong to is the great mystery of the moment. Even back in your childhood, it was always the same story—you on the outside with your nose pressed against the windowpane, while all the people on the inside were laughing and singing their songs of togetherness. Although the lunation in your 11th house brings it all back now, remember that whether they welcome you in or not, you will always have God on your side. Is that any consolation?



Bijou Phillips

ARIES MARCH 21–APRIL 19

Like all the obsessive individuals in the world who know deep down what is good for them but nevertheless continue to do the opposite, you are still fighting for survival and defending a stupid career that is giving you nothing but heartache. Although you should be at home playing with the dog and appreciating all the truly beautiful things life has to offer you, the eclipse in your midheaven compels you to remain enmeshed in political triangles you are hoping and praying will bring you greater economic security. If that weren't so pathetic, it would be funny.



Master P

TAURUS APRIL 20–MAY 20

Since you are making such a noble effort to be honest and truthful and ethical in all your dealings, it must pain you deeply to be confronted by aggressive and hostile people (mostly male control freaks) who insist on challenging your righteous position. With the ruler of your solar 9th house still crawling through your sign, you know full well that you are right and everybody else is crazy, but it would still be to your advantage to at least pretend to listen to their grievances, however flawed, and give some semblance of opening your mind.



Anna Kournikova

GEMINI MAY 21–JUNE 21

It would be difficult for even the most agile and ambidextrous of Geminis—who can usually handle two things at once—to drive a car along an icy back road and talk on a cell phone at the same time. During such moments you need some focus. Similarly, when the ruler of your 8th house disposes of an eclipse from your 12th and you're in the middle of a major spiritual crisis, you really can't go around obsessing about sex or money while professing to be doing what God and your dead grandmother's spirit want you to do. Or can you?



Jesse Ventura

CANCER JUNE 22–JULY 22

If you are the one who is automatically expected to handle all the details and take all the responsibility, naturally you're going to be freaking out about budgets and money. With no real support or encouragement from those who are supposed to be your allies, playing the adult and coping with life can be a pretty lonely business. When you come right down to it, though, what other options do you have? While the nodes are in your 1st and 7th houses, you either deal bravely with the pressure or keep leaning on people who aren't there. And where does that get you?



LeAnn Rimes

VIRGO AUG. 23–SEP

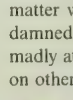
If your life were a 1930s movie melodrama, it would be pe appropriate for you to stand before a fireplace, decked out in a fur w a hat with a veil, peeling your gloves off a finger at a time and makir pronouncements about loving and being loved. This is the 21st ce however, and you are not Maureen O'Sullivan or Charles Boyer. Whi true that 5th-house transits of the south node bring out the corn in all it is not in your best interest to perform a tearjerker unless you are paid for it.



Calista Flockhart

SCORPIO OCT. 24–NO

You are in no mood to be passive or forgiving to those who been spending their time trespassing against you. Since Mars left you house and entered your 1st, you have been back in full Scorpio mode creative juices flowing and primitive rage coursing through your soul. C though. With a solar eclipse occurring in your 3rd house, anything yo can and will be used against you in a court of law, especially when it to siblings or neighbors. In the interest of survival, could you please ju to think twice before blowing people away?



Stephen Hawking

CAPRICORN DEC. 22–JA

Staring into the mirror and making faces at yourself whenev body is looking is no way to raise your level of confidence and reg sense of compassion toward what you perceive as your tired, decrepi tence. Even though you may see yourself as a complete and utter f you should make a conscious effort not to lose respect for those wh support and believe in you, at least until the moon's south node l leaves Capricorn in October. And as for your precious independenc not a mortal sin to need somebody, you know.

To hear more about what's happening in your horoscope—and everyone else's—listen to Michael Lutin weekly by calling 1-900-28V-FAIR on a Touch-Tone phone. Cost: $1.95 per minute. If you are under 18, you need parental permission.

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PROUST QUESTIONNAIRE



JULIAN SCHNABEL

His pottery-shard paintings were a controversial symbol of the 80s art scene, and his more recent forays into music and moviemaking have stirred admiration and envy in equal measure. Julian Schnabel, long a bearlike fixture on New York's downtown arts and dinner-party circuit, now strikes again with *Before Night Falls*, his second film. On the eve of its release, he pauses to reflect on the pleasures of sarongs, ordering everything on the menu, and feeling just a bit like Jesus Christ

What is your idea of perfect happiness?
Swimming.

Which historical figure do you most identify with?
Jesus.

Which living person do you mo admire?
César Rincón.

What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?
Being too honest.

What is the trait you most deplore in others?
Fakeness.

What is your greatest extravagance?
Ordering everything on the menu.

What do you consider the most overrated virtue?
The ability to wear a skirt.

On what occasion do you lie?
My life is a mountain of lie

What do you dislike most abou your appearance?
My ability to wear a skirt.

Which words or phrases do yo most overuse?
"The thing is this . . . "

What is your greatest regret?
Yelling at my children.

When and where were you happiest?
In my head.

What do you consider your greatest achievement?
Being self-employed.

If you could choose what to come back as, what would it be?
I ain't coming back.

What is your most treasured possession?
My old bathrobe.

Where would you like to live?
Near a beach.

What is your favorite occupation?
Painting or making movies.

What is your most marked characteristic?
Charm.

What do you most value in your friends?
Honesty.

Who are your favorite writers?
William Gaddis, Patrick Süskind, Dave Eggers.

Who are your heroes in real life?
Marlon Brando, Spartacus, Chris Rock.

How would you like to die?
Calmly.

What is your motto?
"I lost my purse, but I found my perch."

PHOTOGRAPH BY GASPER TRINGALE





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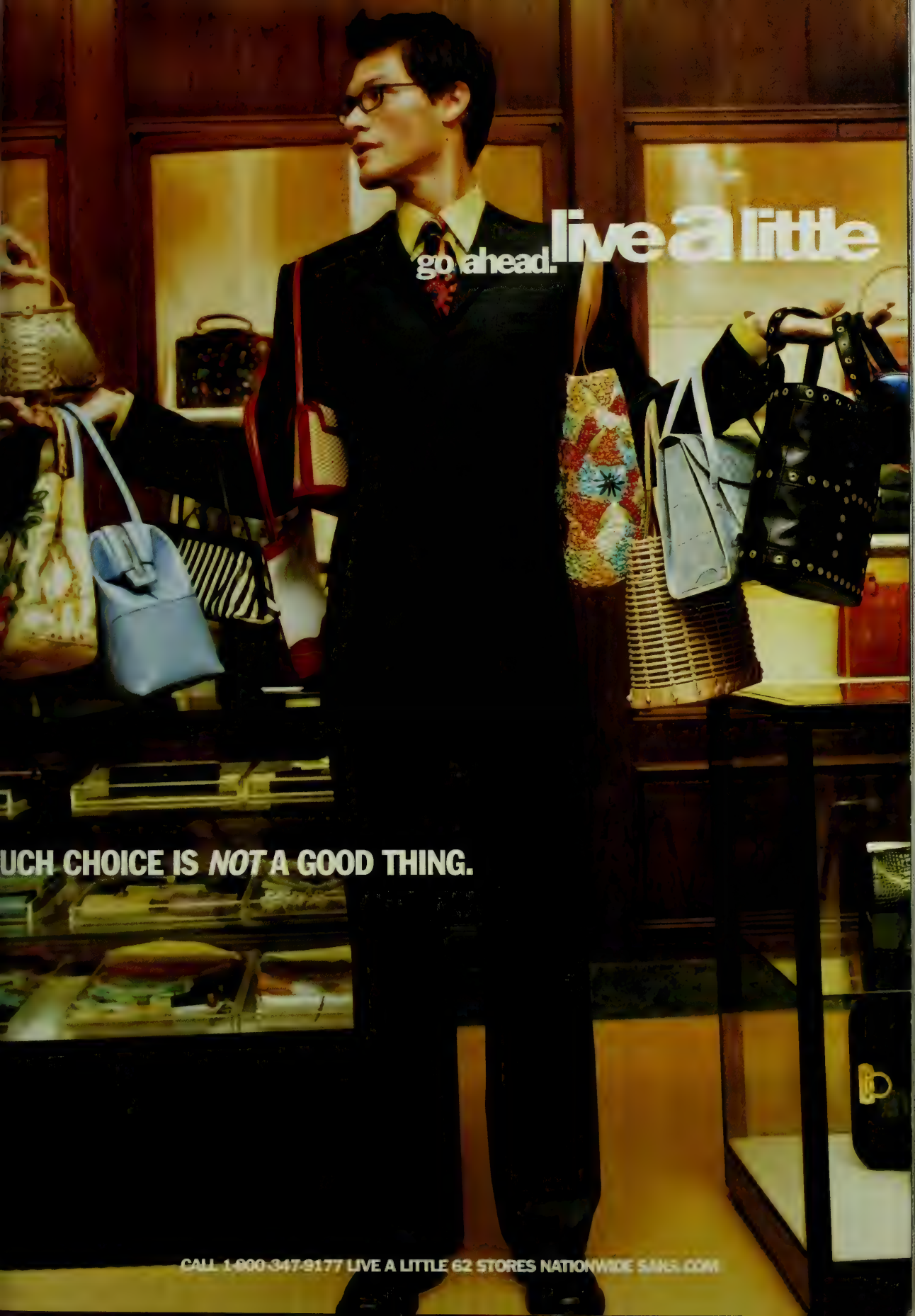

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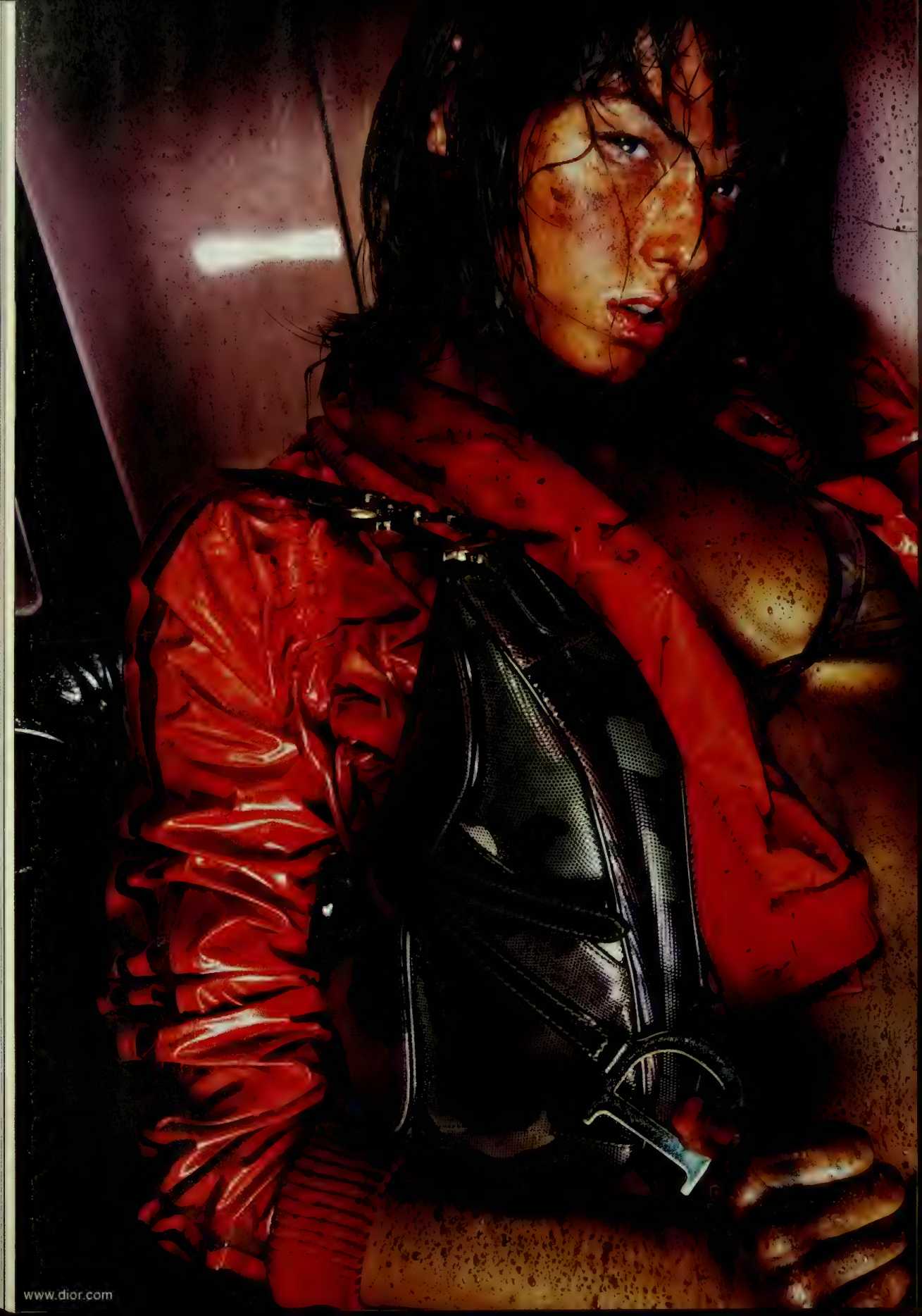





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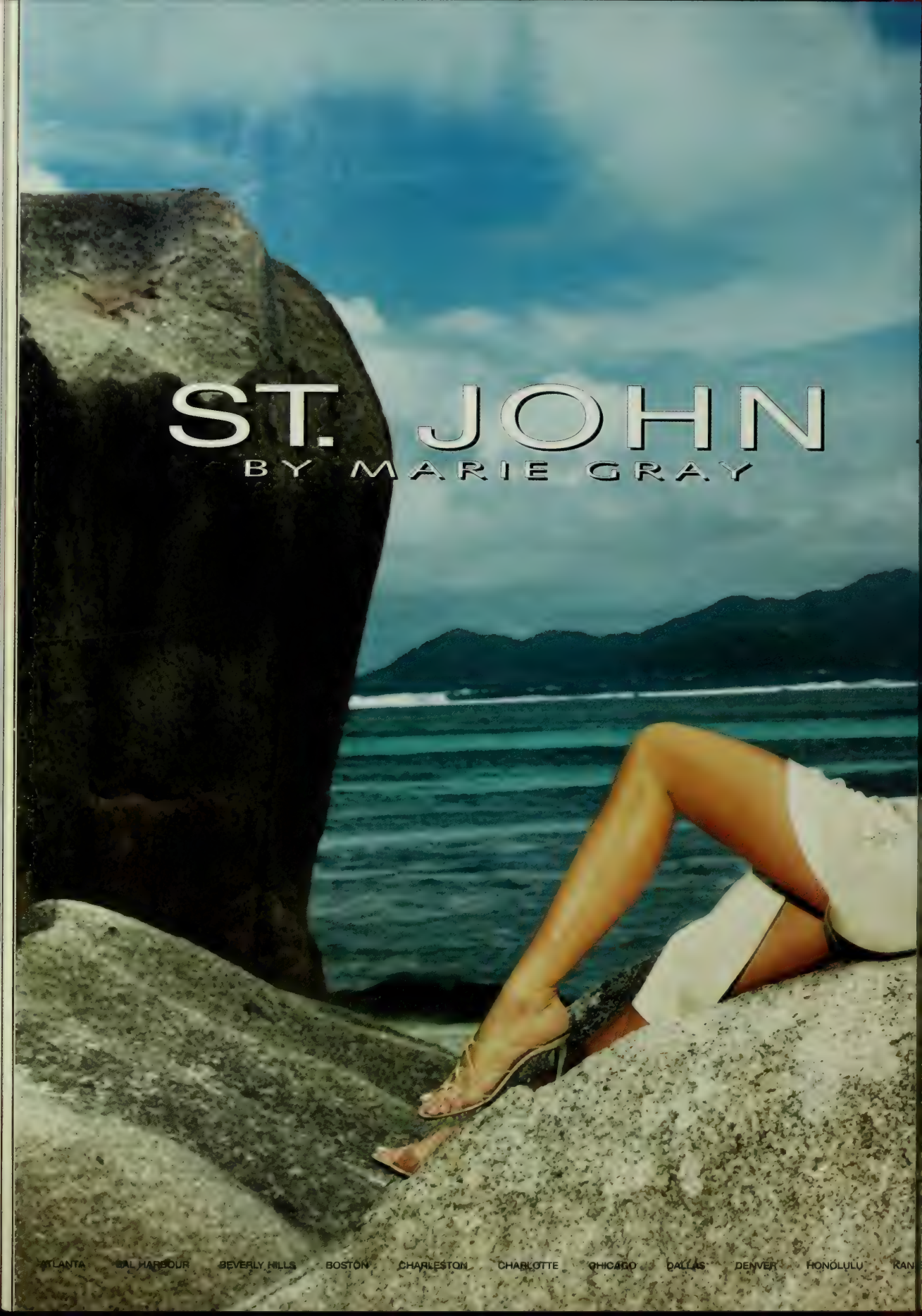
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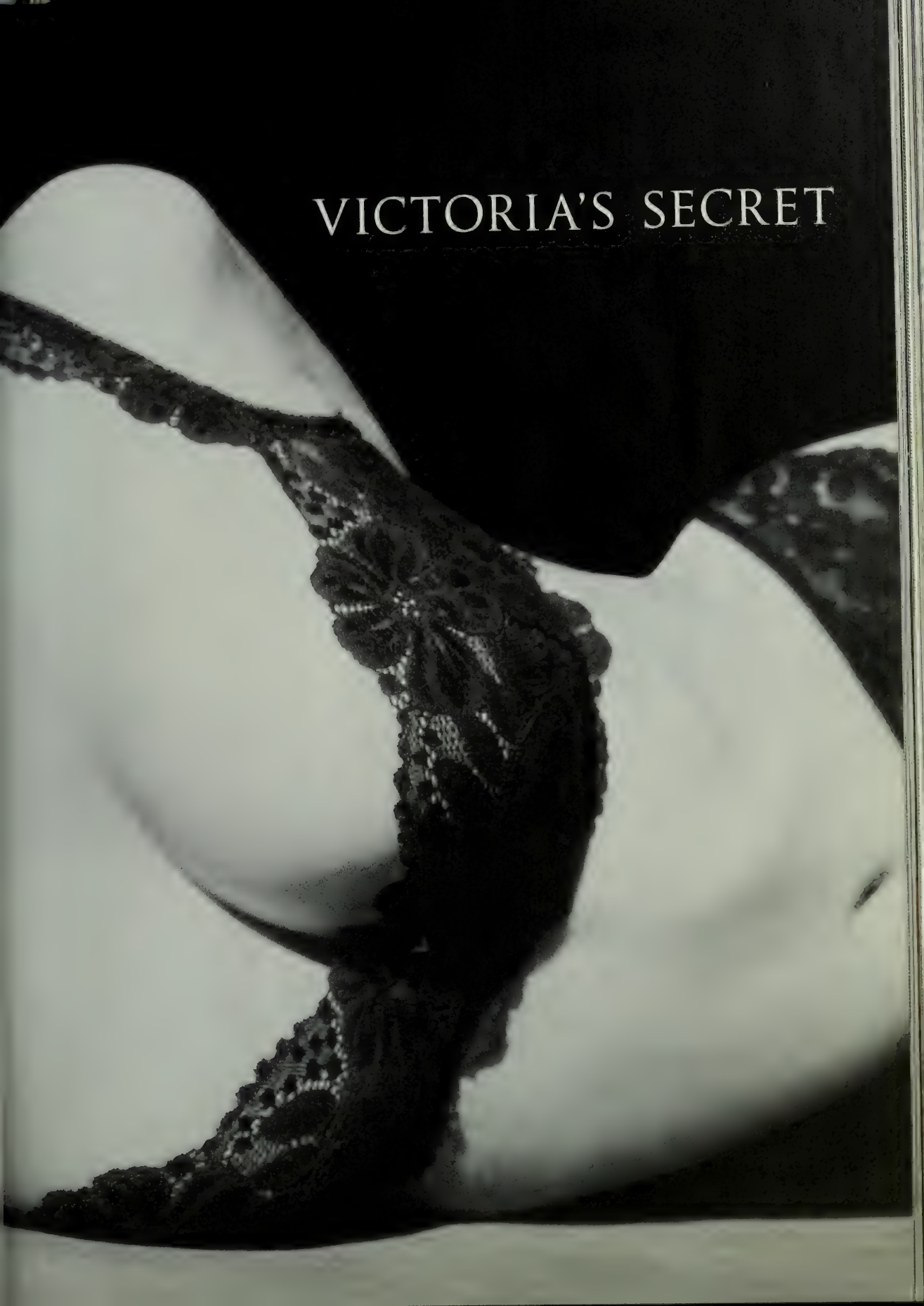
Kelly Gray in St. John Couture at La Digue Island, Seychelles.

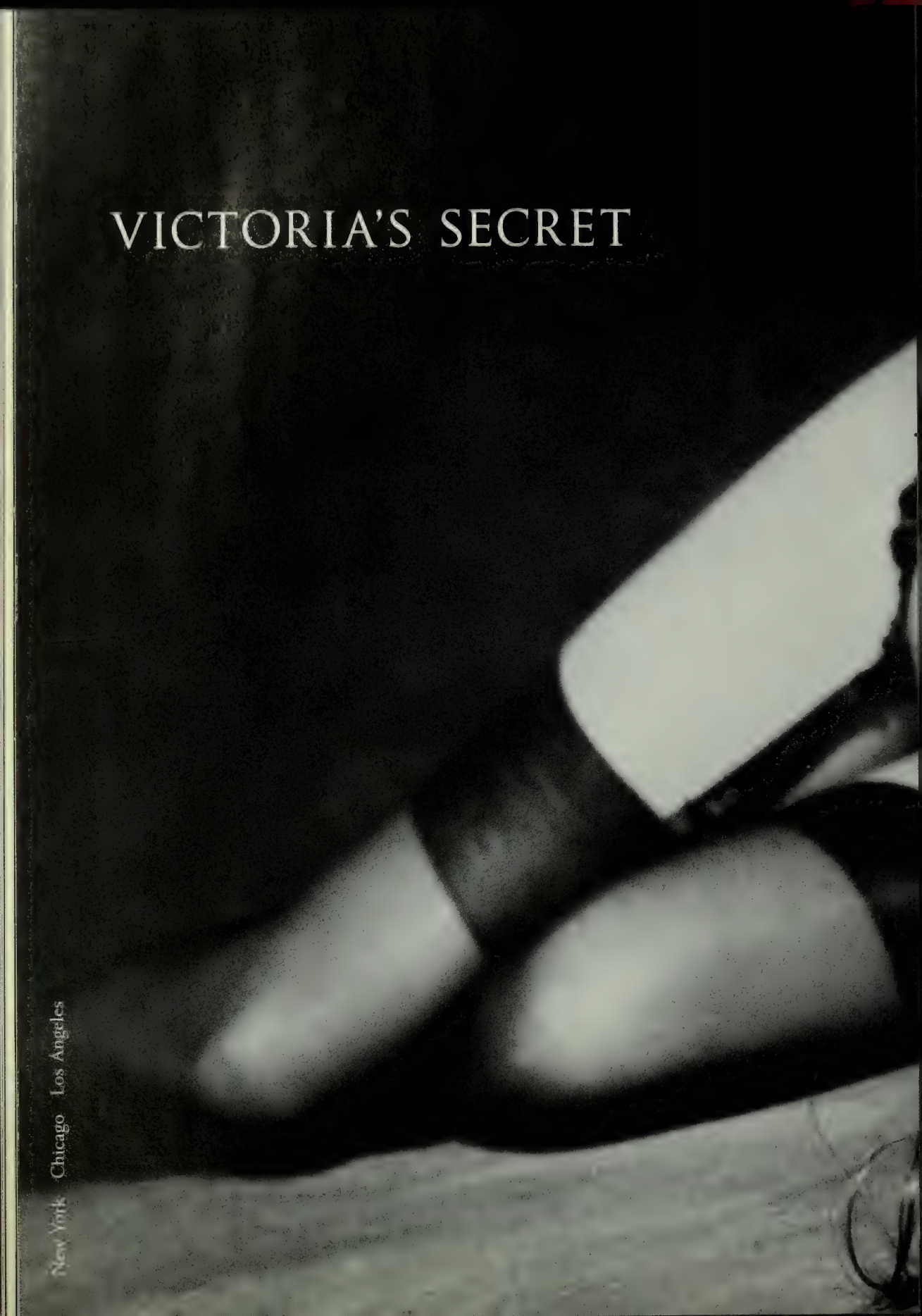
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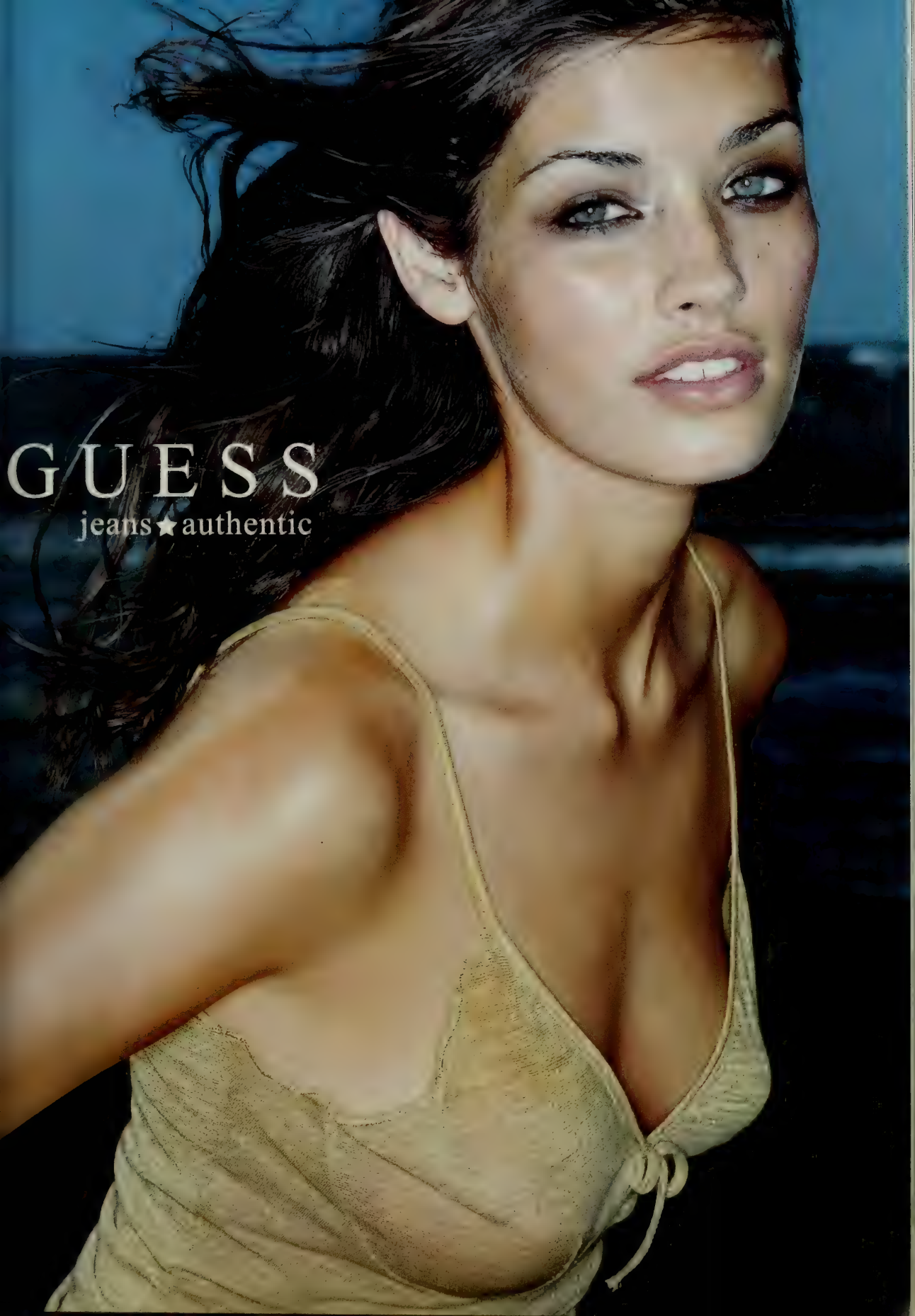
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Features

THE PASSIONS OF JULIANNE MOORE With Oscar-nominated performances in *The End of the Affair* and *Boogie Nights,* Julianne Moore has shown a genius for inhabiting any character she plays. Her latest challenge is the role of Clarice Starling (originated by Jodie Foster), opposite Anthony Hopkins in *Hannibal,* the sequel to *The Silence of the Lambs.* Leslie Bennetts catches up with Hollywood's hottest, hardest-working 40-year-old actress, for a discussion of love (but not marriage), motherhood, and cannibalism. Photographs by Herb Ritts 212

SPRINGTIME FOR BROADWAY Michael O'Neill and James Wolcott spotlight the upcoming Broadway adaptation of Mel Brooks's 1968 comic movie classic, *The Producers.* With Tony Award winners Nathan Lane and Matthew Broderick playing the bumbling scam artists, what's not to laugh about? 218

THE HEIRESS AND THE HAIRDRESSER Libet Johnson's share of the vast Johnson & Johnson fortune made her one of America's richest women, even as she remained one of its most private. But Suzanna Andrews finds that, since Johnson's recent splashy New York real-estate maneuverings and her high-profile romance with society hairstylist Frédéric Fekkai, the heiress's search for love and excitement—the five husbands, the private jets, and the liaison with a French chauffeur—has become a hot topic among the A-list 220

... AND GOD CREATED PAM Herb Ritts and Walter Kirn spotlight *Baywatch* pinup Pamela Anderson, now a producer and star of another campy syndicated jigglefest, *V.I.P.,* who has just made a match, post–Tommy Lee, with the one man who may be her physical equal 224

KOONS, HIGH AND LOW Nearly bankrupted by his own creative ideals, and waging a bitter custody battle against his ex-wife, Italian porno-politician La Cicciolina, 80s art star Jeff Koons seemed to have lost the buoyant vision that fueled such iconic works as *Puppy.* Ingrid Sischy charts the comeback, with Koons's "Celebration" project, of an artist whose life and work have been deeply misunderstood. Photographs by Todd Eberle 226

DEAR DAME EDNA ... Legendary Australian housewife, humanitarian, and mega-star Dame Edna Everage takes a few moments to reach out to her fans, with wise advice on problems including literary crushes, lecherous yogis, and multiple orgasms 236

HUGH HEFNER'S ROARING 70S In 1953, Hugh Hefner invented a lifestyle. Then he lived it—until his stroke and 1989 marriage launched an unlikely experiment in quasi-bourgeois domesticity. Now, a month shy of his 75th birthday, the legendary playboy is back in the saddle: just ask Tina, Regina, Stephanie, Tiffany, Cathi, Katie, and Buffy, his days-of-the-week blondes. Nancy Jo Sales visits the Bunny-packed Mansion and talks with Hef about bisexuality, Viagra, and how he keeps "Girl Scout Troop 36" happy. Photograph by David LaChapelle 238

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CRIMES OF THE ART When art dealer Paul Guillaume died in 1934, he left an unparalleled collection of Picassos, Renoirs, Cézannes, Matisses, Modiglianis, and more, which sparked 20th-century France's most sensational art scandal. With the masterpieces on display at the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth, Texas, John Richardson recounts how Guillaume's rapacious and seductive widow, Domenica, committed blackmail and forgery and attempted murder to retain her grip on his legacy 246

SNAPSHOTS FROM A FAIRY TALE Jet-set beauty, sister of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, and friend to artists including Andy Warhol, Truman Capote, and Rudolf Nureyev, Lee Radziwill has a past worth documenting. In photographs from her forthcoming memoir-cum-scrapbook, Radziwill shares candid moments from her golden childhood, the Kennedy White House, and her style-setting years at the creative epicenter, as Amy Fine Collins provides the narrative 254

Fanfair

31 DAYS IN THE LIFE OF THE CULTURE Red dawn—Russian baritone Dmitri Hvorostovsky debuts at Lincoln Center with Verdi's *La Traviata.* Elissa Schappell's Hot Type. Hot Reels: Chris Mitchell on the reality-TV send-up *Series 7;* Coming Attractions—Walter Kirn confesses an *Original Sin.* A. M. Homes on British painter Gary Hume; Edward Helmore surfs the Web's virtual art world. Henry Porter reviews the hit London play *Stones in His Pockets; Vive la France!*—A Postcard from Paris. On the waterfront—the new splendor of Williamsburg, Brooklyn..... 119

Columns

THRONE OF CONTENTION The end of the Windsor dynasty is no longer a question of if, but of when, argues Christopher Hitchens. Her Majesty's pleasure—and her all-too-real power, codified in ancient statutes—has been challenged by a new British law, a crusading newspaper editor, and one of the U.K.'s most talented and famous lawyers 138

ANOTHER PARTY, ANOTHER CLUE When he's not writing about the crimes of the rich and privileged, Dominick Dunne has a social calendar that verges on the exhausting. But, as the first of his periodic diaries reveals, it's not all fun and frivolity; the New York dinners at Barbara Walters's and the parties with *le tout Paris* are gold mines of information about such ongoing dramas as the death of Edmond Safra and the Moxley murder. Portrait by Jonas Karlsson 148

TALE OF THE APES Mary Ellen Mark and Bruce Handy spotlight Tim Burton's re-invented *Planet of the Apes,* starring Mark Wahlberg as the human astronaut and Helena Bonham Carter, Tim Roth, and Michael Clarke Duncan as the planet's simian leaders 160

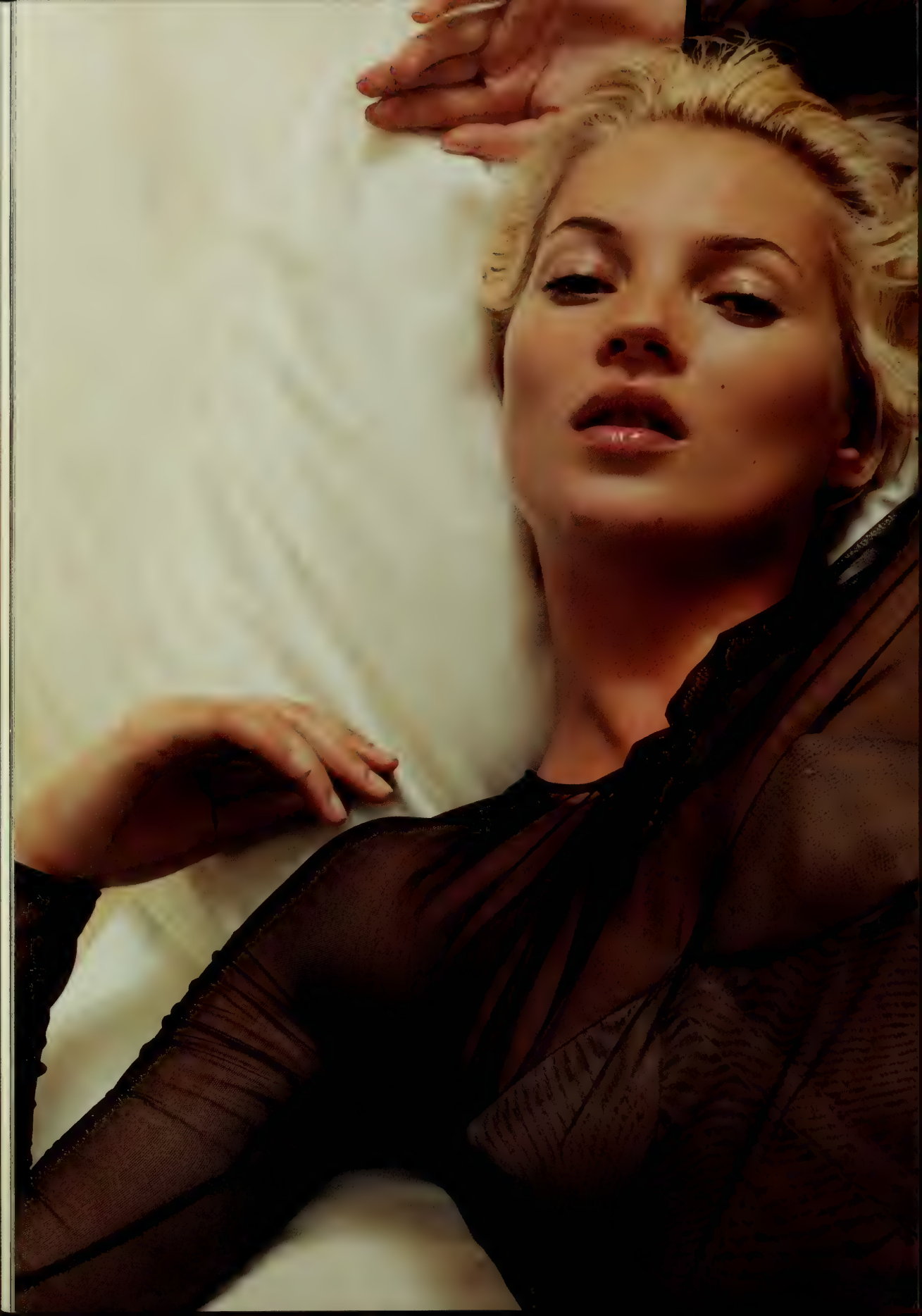
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IN THE DOT-COM DOLDRUMS For a generation of kids, getting their first job meant joining the Internet gold rush and kicking back as soon as the I.P.O. riches rolled in. After a year in which roughly one in every five dot-com start-ups went bust and 40,000 employees were axed, Evgenia Peretz checks in with the young and rentless, who lost their illusions along with their jobs. Photographs by Jason Schmidt 162

PLEASURES OF THE FUR Thousands of Americans are proud and passionate "furries"—they have a deep and, in some cases, erotic attachment to wolf, bear, fox, and other animal characters. George Gurley meets 400 of the faithful at the annual blowout known as Midwest FurFest, to explore a world in which stuffed animals are fetish objects and tail-making workshops are serious business. Portraits by Harry Benson 174

Vanities

PRINCE VINCE Common Grounds—Henry Alford's primer for a new millennium; *S.N.L.* star Will Ferrell inaugurates his speed dial; Divided Attentions: tracking national obsessions; singer Nicky Love's very interesting year; Guided by Voices' high fidelity; Out & In—Beltway lesbians, Pirate's Booty 199

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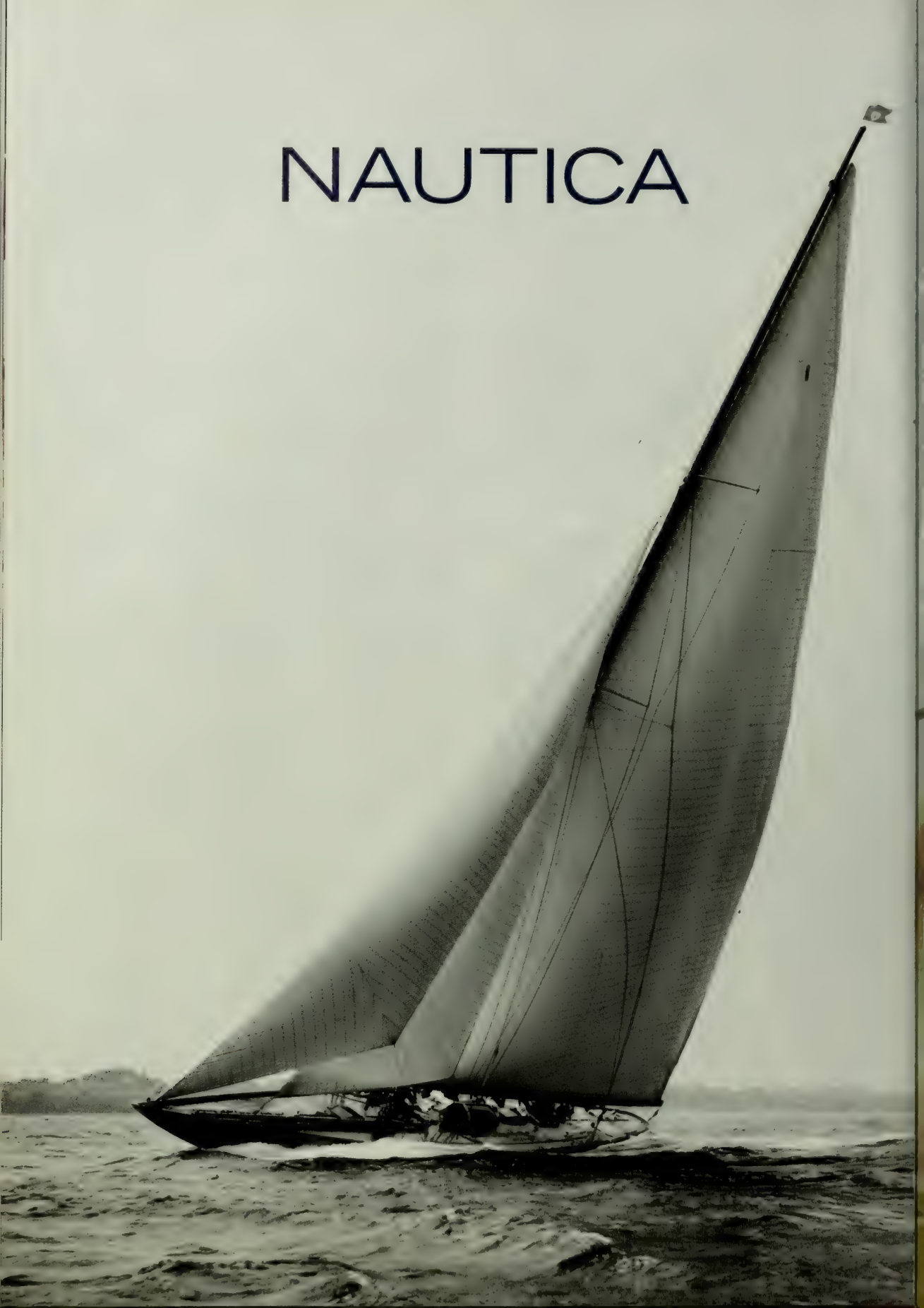
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k.d. lang did some post-concert partying with more than 200 fans on November 15 at a bash hosted by Hennessy and *Vanity Fair* at Muriel's Supper Club in Palm Springs. While dancing the night away, k.d. and her fans sipped on Hennessy cocktails and got a taste of hors d'oeuvres created by Chef Douglas Brown.



Left to right: **k.d. lang and Barry Manilow.**

FRED Joaillier

Vanity Fair and FRED Joaillier rang in the holiday season on November 28 with a treasure hunt for FRED's most valued customers at the jeweler's Rodeo Drive store. Guests enjoyed cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and live music. Two lucky winners each walked away with an exclusive piece.



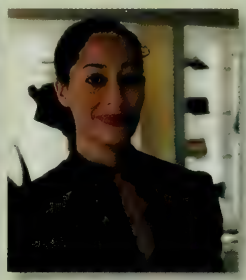
Left to right: **Juliet Boghossian and Sergio Baril of FRED Joailler choose the lucky winners of the FRED pieces.**

Bottega Veneta

On December 5, Bottega Veneta and *Vanity Fair* hosted 40 of L.A.'s fashion-savvy celebrity stylists for a private fashion luncheon at the Rodeo Drive Bottega Veneta boutique. In addition to an exclusive preview of the company's new line of clothing and accessories, attendees had the opportunity to mingle with company executives and celebrities including Maria Conchita Alonso.



Left to right: **Maria Conchita Alonso; Tracee Ellis Ross; Elizabeth Gruber and Caroline Berthet.**





Madison Avenue BID

On November 9, *Vanity Fair* and the Madison Avenue Business Improvement District held a reception at the Whitney Museum of American Art to celebrate the BID's Pink Ribbon Project. *Vanity Fair* and more than 90 Madison Avenue businesses contributed to the project, which raised $50,000 for Breast Cancer treatment at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center and the Mount Sinai Breast Health Resource Program. The event also celebrated a two-week exhibition of photographs from *Vanity Fair's Hollywood*—a book of photographs, illustrations, and essays from *Vanity Fair* that were on display in the Madison Avenue shop windows. Catering for the reception was by Chef Daniel Boulud's Feasts and Fêtes.

Left to right: **Whitney Museum and Memorial Sloan-Kettering representatives; Gail Winston of Richemont North America, Inc., and Evelyn Lauder.**







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Perry Ellis Tribute at FIT



Left to right: **Pablo de Echevarria of Perry Ellis International; Evangeline Morphos, donor, the Perry Ellis Morphos Collection; Dr. Valerie Steele of The Museum at FIT; and Barbara Gallagher, mother of Tyler Ellis, daughter of the late Perry Ellis.**

An exhibition honoring legendary designer Perry Ellis at the Fashion Institute of Technology opened on November 8 in New York City. More than 800 fashion aficionados joined *Vanity Fair* and Perry Ellis notables at a FIT Museum reception. Fourteen timeless Perry Ellis ensembles were on display (donated by Evangeline Morphos from her private collection, which were part of the Museum exhibit from November 9 through January 13). Music was provided by Uri Caine and his jazz trio.

Jazz It Up

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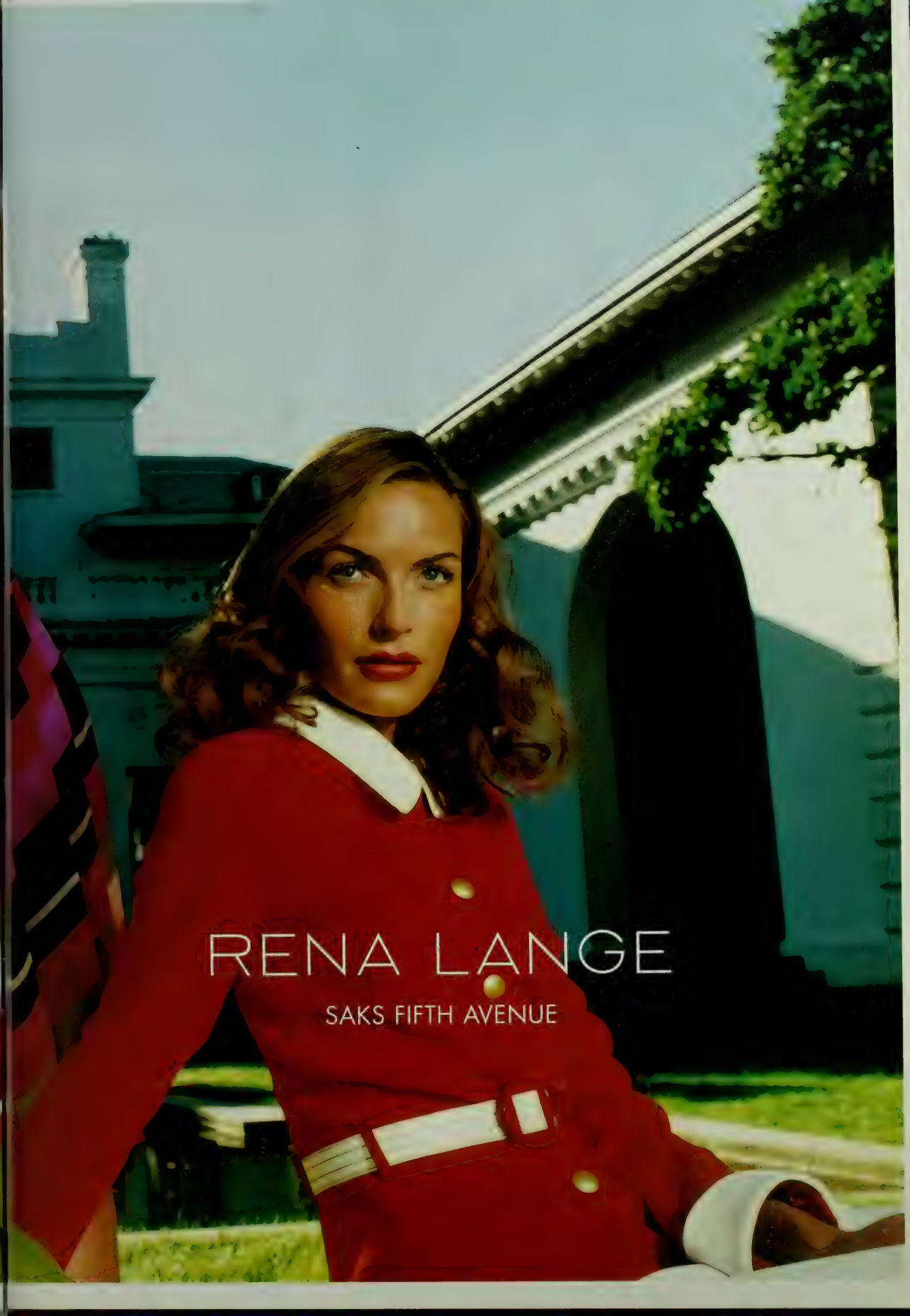


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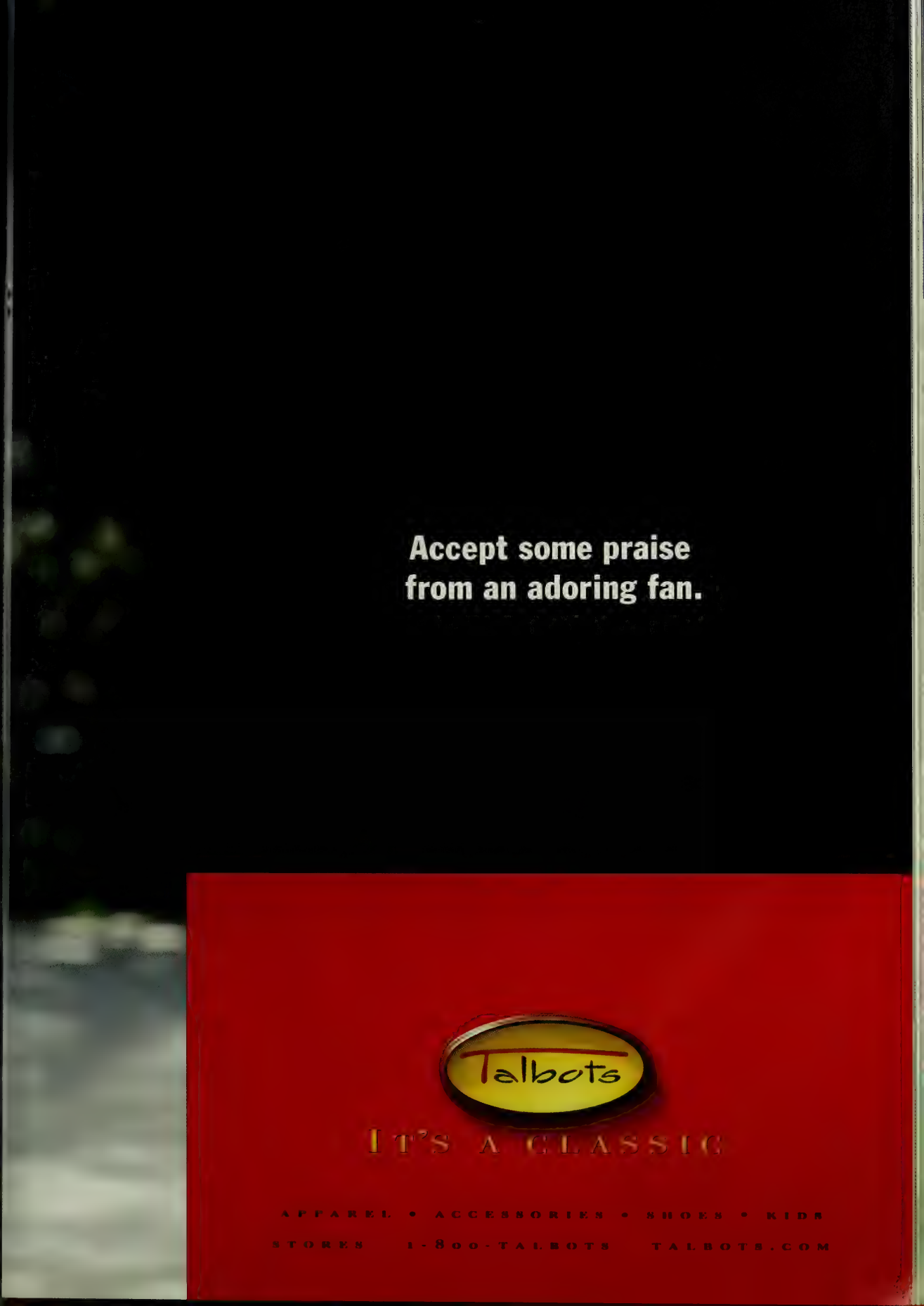
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Advice and Consent



Smack-dab in the middle of the well (the part of the magazine near the back where there are no ads) is a new feature that I enjoin you to read. It is an advice-to-the-lovelorn column written by Dame Edna Everage, châtelaine of the world's stages and, for more than three decades, an icon of cross-dressing performance mastery. As you will see, her responses to queries ranging from the existence of multiple orgasms to the sexual attraction between housewives and their yoga instructors are just shy of brilliant.

Oscar Humphries, the son of Dame Edna's alter ego, Barry Humphries, worked here at *Vanity Fair* a few Christmases ago. Dame Edna was on Broadway at the time, and I decided to take three of my children to the show. Knowing that her act involved culling people from the audience and then gently humiliating them, I told Oscar that if she called me up I would come back to the office and throttle him. Dame Edna didn't pick me; Oscar survived; and a few weeks later over lunch with Barry Humphries, I learned that she looks for certain types in the audience, and blessedly I wasn't one of them.

I would love to claim credit for the idea of having her write this advice column, but I can't. It came b way of our contributing artist Hila Knight, the inimitable illustrator of th Eloise books. Hilary's work has a peared regularly in *Vanity Fair,* mo often as illustrations for the essa Brooke Astor does on modern soci mores. We approached Dame Edn who embraced the idea, and her fir column, along with Hilary's peerless illustrations, appears on pag 236. I would love this to be a monthly feature, but Dame Edn currently on a 60-city tour, can find time to produce only four them a year. So the existence of the column, but just on a quarte ly basis, is a good-news/bad-news situation for us poor possums.

In Dame Edna's first column, she gives scant attention to the su ject of child rearing, a fact that will no doubt warm Oscar's hear As the father of four, may I offer my own kernel of all-purpos advice to parents in the grip of a querulous child? When childre are still at an age where they can be mortified by the actions their parents, simply say that if they don't smarten up, you a going to put on a thong and perform T'ai Chi exercises in the school yard at lunchtime the next day. Until my children grew an age where they were alert to the fact that this was clearly an id threat, it worked wonders.

—GRAYDON CARTE

Lounge Act



ON THE COVER
Julianne Moore wears a jacket by Costume National. Hair by Robert Vetica. Makeup by Genevieve. Styled by L'Wren Scott. *Right,* Moore, in a blouse by Roberto Cavalli and sandals by Jimmy Choo, was photographed exclusively for *V.F.* by Herb Ritts at the Kaufmann House in Palm Springs, California, on December 20, 2000.


GIORGIO ARMANI


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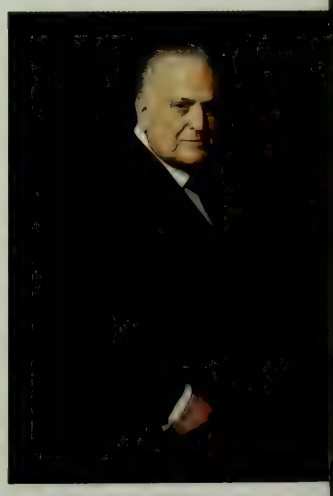


Dame Edna Everage, the Australian author and actress, is one of the most popular and successful women in the world. Her recent Broadway triumph, *Dame Edna: The Royal Tour,* received a Special Tony Award. At the height of her powers, Dame Edna is at once diva, investigative journalist, chanteuse, swami, *monstre sacré,* and philanthropist. A widow, she is the mother of a grown-up, if slightly dysfunctional, family, and founder of the worldwide charitable organization Friends of the Prostate. She is also the convener of the world's first Prostate Olympics, to be held in Australia. Dame Edna describes her opportunity to answer the questions of *Vanity Fair* readers as "a growth challenge."



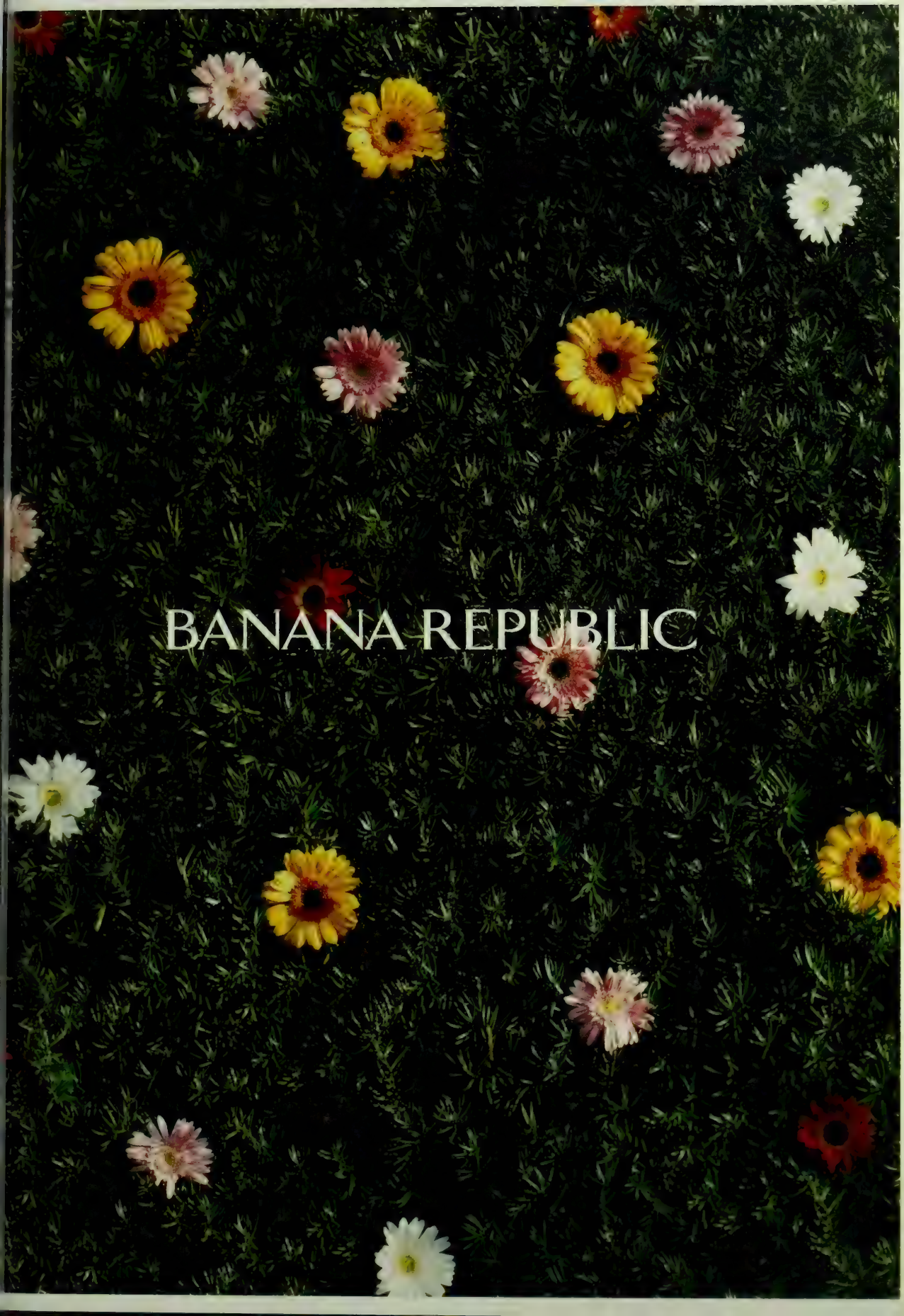
GASPER TRINGALE

Contributing editor **Ingrid Sischy** first met the controversial Jeff Koons a little under 20 years ago when she was editor in chief of *Artforum*. "I asked him for an artist's project for the magazine," recalls Sischy, whose story on Koons's complicated life and recent professional comeback starts on page 226. "During the week that we were trying to go to press, Jeff called constantly, up to the last moment, trying to refine and perfect the project. I began to witness then the reason why he has become an artist's artist: he does not let go!" Sischy is the editor in chief of *Interview* magazine.



It's safe to say that most visitors who see the masterpieces from the Musée de l'Orangerie currently on display at Fort Worth's Kimbell Museum do not know the collection's delicious backstory, which **John Richardson** relates on page 246. "Too bad Joan Crawford's dead, because Domenica Walter has the evil panache of a Joan Crawford character," Richardson says of his story's scheming protagonist. The article will also appear in *Sacred Monsters* (Random House), a collection of Richardson's profiles of other formidable and often treacherous creatures, including Truman Capote, Armand Hammer, and Gala Dalí, which is due out in the fall. Richardson is currently working on the third volume of his authoritative Picasso biography.

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From her office on the Place du Palais Bourbon, Paris editor **Véronique Plazolles** keeps the magazine up on the latest European trends, restaurants, and hot spots. For the past 10 years, she has worked in conjunction with the New York headquarters, doing everything from coordinating shoots to researching hard-to-find pictures. And on occasion, she says, "I've had to play detective." Like the time last year when she was dispatched to track down Enzo Staiola, the child star of Vittorio De Sica's 1948 film, *The Bicycle Thief,* for a portrait that would appear in the Hollywood issue. Why was the assignment so tough? "He didn't have an agent and he hadn't acted in almost 50 years."



SETH TARAS

In the four years that he's been a staff reporter at *The New York Observer,* **George Gurley** has covered a variety of human-interest stories. None has been as bizarre as his article this month for *V.F.* on "furries," the growing subculture of people with an intense interest in animal characters. Attending Chicago's four-day-long Midwes FurFest, Gurley made an unsettling discovery: "I knew that some of these people were intimate with their stuffed animals, but I was actually more surprised to learn that they wanted to *be* these animals." A cat owner himself, Gurley now thinks twice about "talking to it as much as I used to in the high-pitched voice."

Special correspondent **Amy Fine Collins** says that Lee Radziwill decided on the format of *Happy Times,* her autobiographical book, to be published by Assouline next month, after she rejected her original plan of writing a full-length memoir. "She wanted to concentrate on only good memories, and on pictures rather than text," says Collins, whose preview of the book starts on page 254. The images encompass Radziwill's childhood with sister Jacqueline; the Kennedy White House years; her friendships with Truman Capote, Rudolf Nureyev, and Andy Warhol; and the interiors of her homes. "Lee Radziwill is a visual person," says Collins, "so it makes sense to depict her life through photographs and drawings."





CATHERINE WILSON

For her monthly Hot Type column, contributing editor **Elissa Schappell** sifts through hundreds of books to find the right balance. "You have to have the most exciting literature and fiction that's coming out, but I also like to get a sleeper in there by someone who really needs it. They're the ones that send you the fruitcakes and the sweaters and offer their organs, which is such a lovely gesture." Meanwhile, Schappell's own first novel, *Use Me,* is out in paperback this month, and she's now at work on a follow-up novel.

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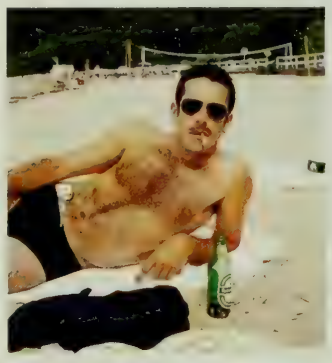
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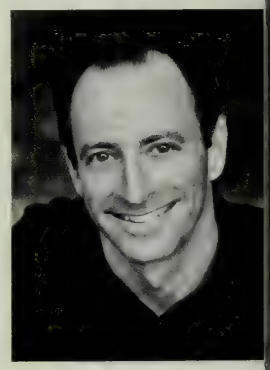


Famous for her social-documentary work, photographer **Mary Ellen Mark** also has a long history of shooting film sets, going back to Fellini's *Satyricon,* which she shot for *Look* magazine in the late 60s. After photographing the set of Tim Burton's *Sleepy Hollow* for the May 1999 issue, Mark returned to his set this month for his re-creation of *Planet of the Apes.* "This was one of the more fascinating film sets because of the incredible costumes and makeup, where man was being transformed into ape," she says. "But it's always interesting to enter Tim Burton's world. It always holds something quite extraordinary."



Photographer **Jason Schmidt,** who on page 162 captures several casualties of the recent dot-com implosion, has witnessed the rise and fall of Internet emperors through his camera lens. "Only six months ago, I was shooting dot-com millionaires," says Schmidt, who also photographed John Vranesevich, one of the F.B.I.'s key weapons of counterattack against hackers, for the June issue of *V.F.* After meeting with such onetime highfliers as Pseudo.com's Josh Harris, and other foundering dot-com entrepreneurs, Schmidt says, "Suddenly, freelance photography seems a stable career choice."

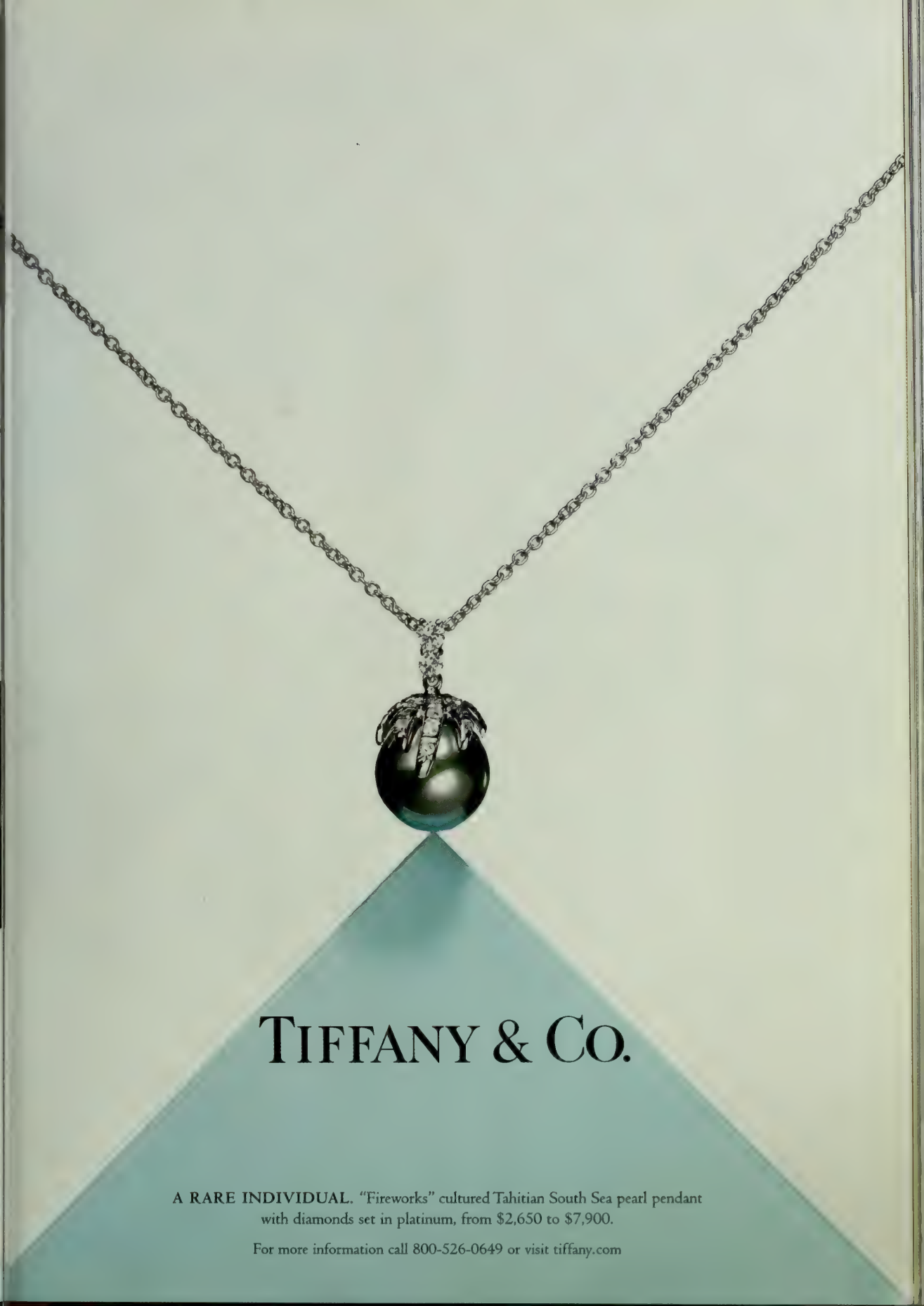
Contributing photographer **Herb Ritts** had just a few hours to shoot cover subject Julianne Moore, who had to fly back to a movie set that evening, but they made the most of their time together. "Julianne is very easy to work with, which is nice when you're under pressure," says Ritts. "Her sense of the camera is so good that you feel her through her eyes." Intimate in another way is Ritts's portrait of Pamela Anderson and her new boyfriend, model Marcus Schenkenberg. "We put them on a fake-fur bed on a cliff overlooking the sea, and just let her go," says Ritts, who has an exhibition of photography currently touring Europe. "It was a little cold, but she's a trooper."



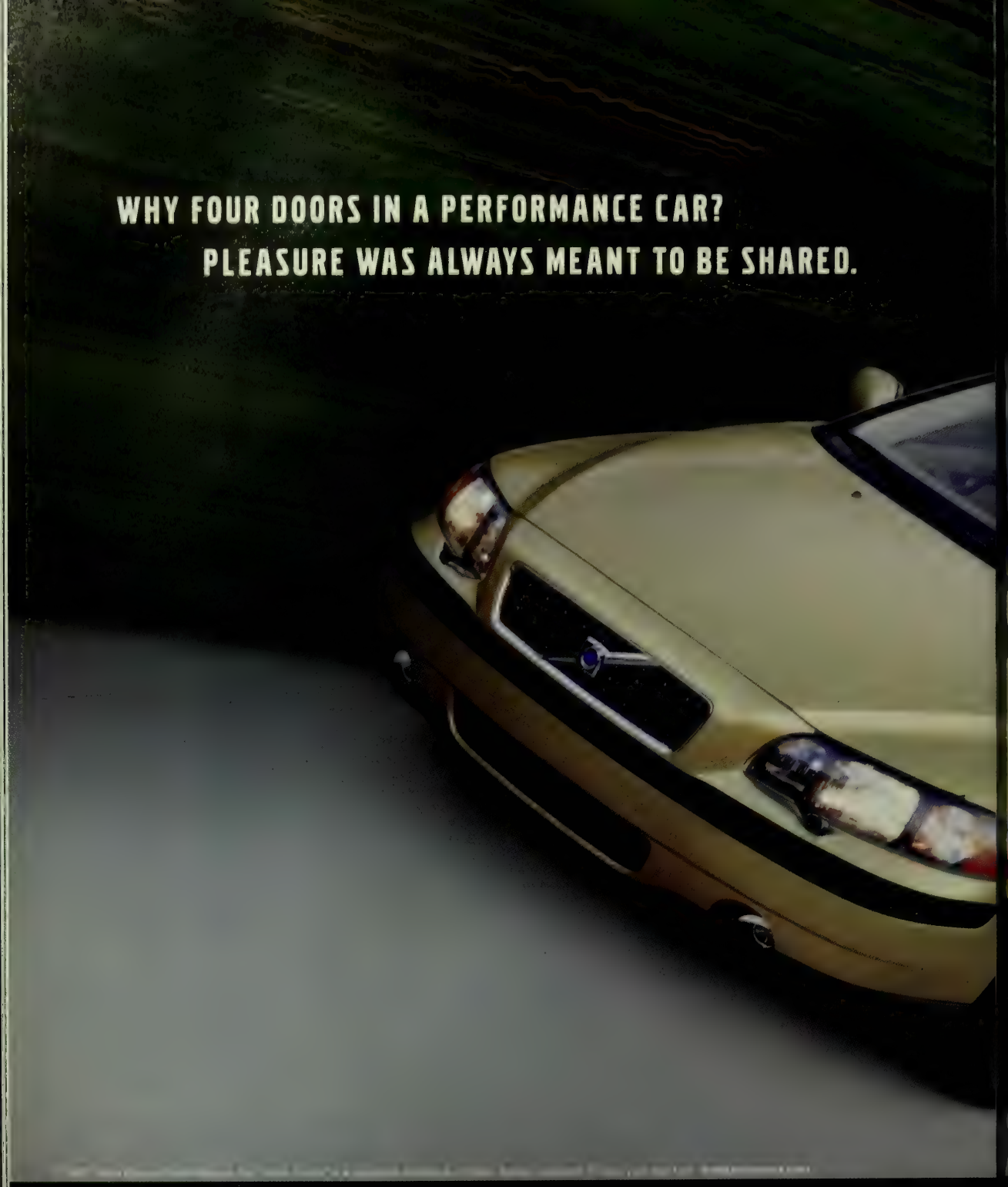


BILL ZULES

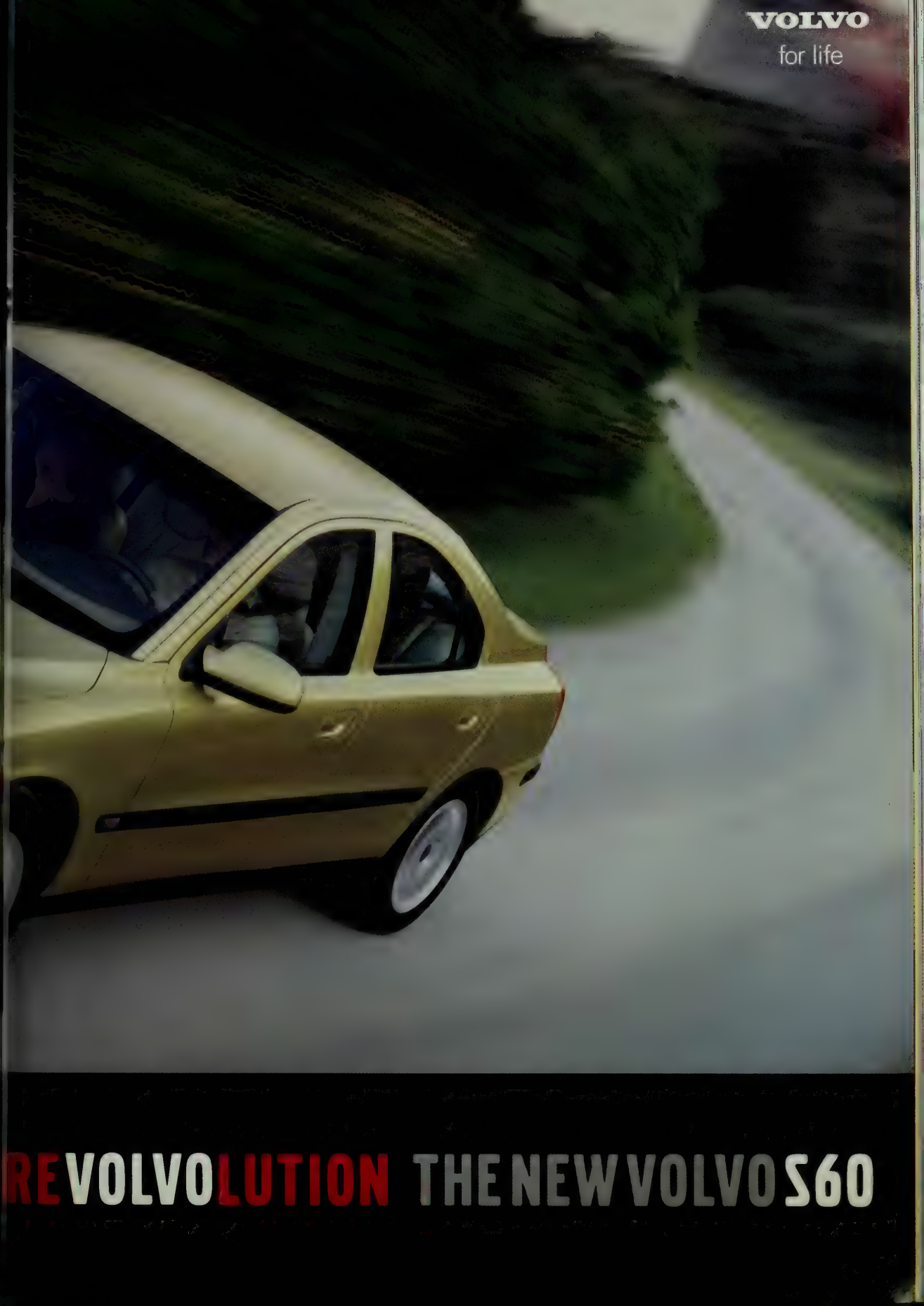
Over the years, contributing editor **Suzanna Andrews** has written numerous stories about people with great wealth, most recently about financier Saul Steinberg. This month, she profiles Libet Johnson, the very rich and very private heiress of the Johnson & Johnson fortune. In Andrews's opinion, having so much money is not something to be envied. "It is very difficult to be that wealthy for men and for women. It breeds so much insecurity," says Andrews. "But part of me does admire how Libet uses her inherited wealth to gain so much freedom, both financially and romantically."


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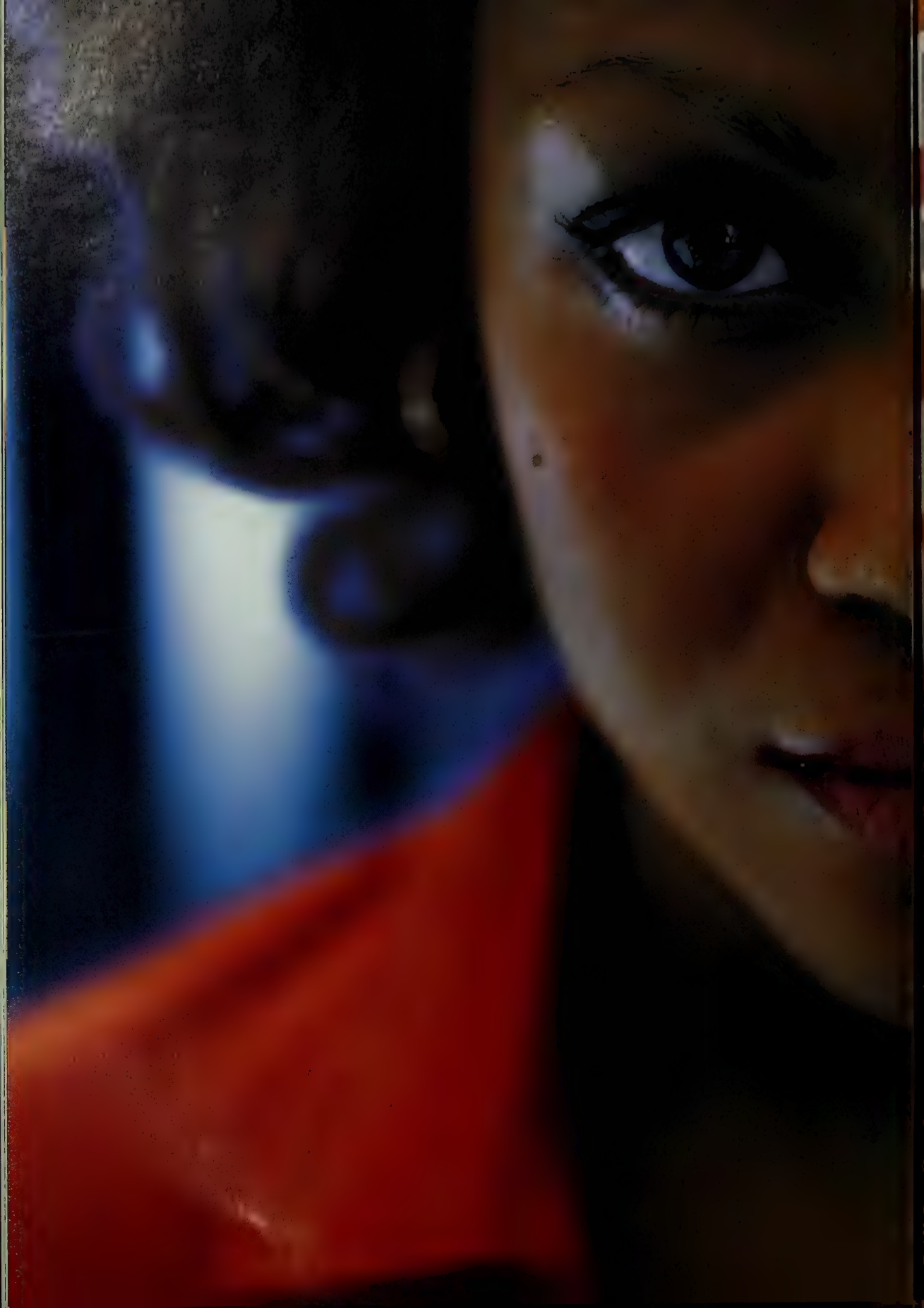
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THE EXCESS FILES

Saul Steinberg gets no pity; Catherine Zeta-Jones in control; conned in 60 seconds; Christopher Hitchens in a state of denial; Darren Star's parallel universe; Congressman Christopher Cox takes the floor; Yousuf Karsh and an image for the ages

In the late 60s in London, Saul Steinberg's battle cry during an epic corporate struggle, in which he tried unsuccessfully to take over Robert Maxwell's Pergamon Press, was: "A crook in America goes to jail; here [in England] crooks get knighted." That defeat, the first of many, cost Steinberg dearly both in terms of corporate and personal loss of face and in terms of shareholder value ["Vanished Opulence," by Suzanna Andrews, January].

It seems inconceivable that a major, N.Y.S.E.-listed company such as Reliance could have lost all of its assets. What was the board of directors doing to prevent this? Had no one the guts to say "Stop!"?

I do not believe Steinberg's newfound role as a pauper. If he was a billionaire 20 years ago, he would have had to spend over $100,000 a day to go through it all. I suspect some of the hoard was secreted away, and someone should look again!

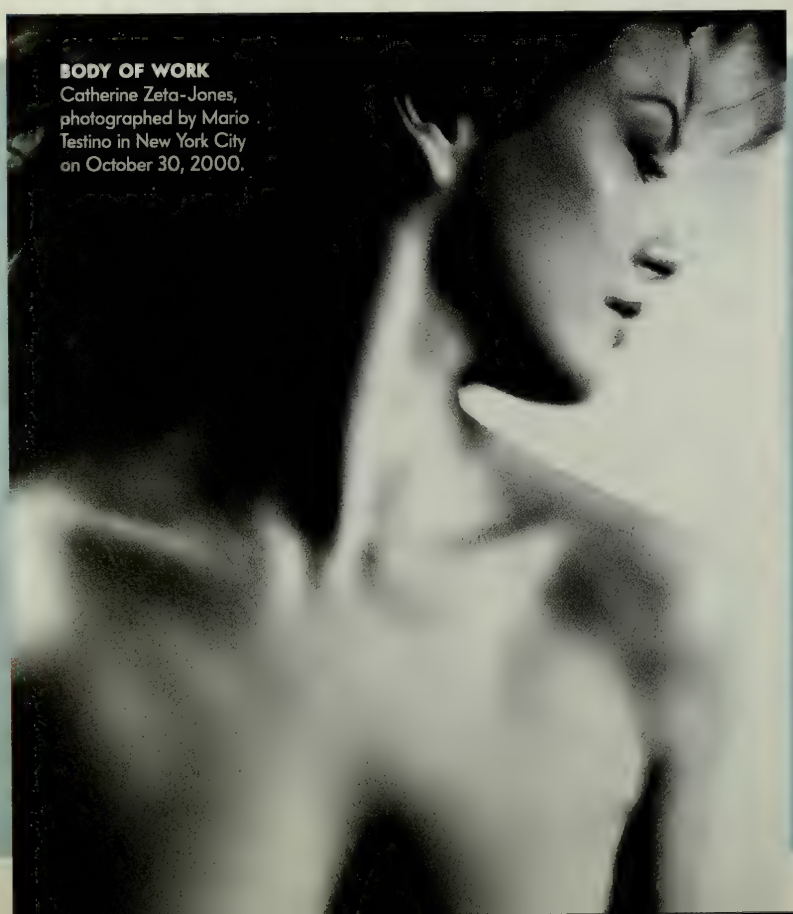
PETER STEVENS
West Hollywood, California

TO LIVE AND LIE IN L.A.

AS BRYAN BURROUGH mentioned in his story "The Counterfeit Rockefeller" [January], I was deceived by Christopher Rocancourt. Ironically, my writing partner and I were working on a black-comedy screenplay about a con artist operating in New England beach society in 1943 when I got a call asking me to work as a stand-in on the *Bulworth* set. On Halloween night 1996, between takes at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel, Chris "De Laurentiis" began a shrewd conversation with me. Friend or Devil? I wasn't sure, but I was fascinated, sucked in like all the others. He was charismatic, seductive, and secretive. Mostly, he made you believe in him.

As Burrough reported, I allowed my new "friend" to make "sure thing" investments for me. But at the very moment Chris took my money I felt like the guy who lays his chips down at the craps table thinking he's going to blow it all, but the dice have been rolled, and he can't take the bet back. My writer's instinct took over, and I began making notes of our conversations and encounters at hip restaurants or dinner parties. We talked almost every day for five months.

By January '97, I suspected fraud and I wanted him investigated. I spoke with a Justice Department official, who suggested I contact the Beverly Hills Police. I did. But no crime had been committed, and the detectives couldn't probe further, be-



BODY OF WORK
Catherine Zeta-Jones, photographed by Mario Testino in New York City on October 30, 2000.

ZETA-JONES ON TOP


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Josie is wearing Healthy Skin Liquid Makeup in Natural Buff and Lipcolor in Blushing Tulip. © 2001 Neutrogena Corp. www.neutrogena.com
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EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Calvin Klein's Season of Giving







Top left to right: **Kevin Calica and Alicia Galitzin of Calvin Klein; Meredith Estess, Valerie Estess, and Julianne Hoffenberg of Project ALS;** *Bottom left to right:* **Geoff Cramer, Nicki Cramer, Tim Kelly, Al James, Julie Burton, and Scott Henry.**

Calvin Klein celebrated the spirit of holiday giving with two in-store shopping events benefiting local charities. The first event was held on November 29 at Calvin Klein's Madison Avenue store in New York. Thirty percent of the evening's sales were donated to Project A.L.S., a non-profit organization that raises awareness and significant funds toward effective treatments and a cure for ALS. A week later, on December 7, the Dallas Calvin Klein store in Highland Park Village hosted their own in-store holiday shopping event. This event benefited DIFFA, one of the largest funders of HIV/AIDS service and education programs in the U.S.

cause no one else had reported him. I needed evidence that he was a criminal, so I wrote a plea in a letter to Chris. The letter was found when the Los Angeles Police raided his Beverly Wilshire Hotel suite. I played with the Devil and I got burned. As I continue to write about Chris from my notes, I believe I have an idea where he may continue his con game. The story isn't as over for me as it is for him.

BUDDY OCHOA
West Hollywood, California

FORBIDDEN PLANET

I READ CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS'S article on North Korea ["Visit to a Small Planet," January] with delight. I have long been interested in this opaque and mysterious land. Hitchens made it less so, and in a humorous, informative way. I was particularly struck by his sentence "The idea of America building a huge, hypothetical, costly 'missile shield' to ward off Little Boy is an especial absurdity."

I hope Hitchens continues to write more on this theme, since the new Republican regime in Washington seems so eager to fatten our military-industrial complex to defend against such ghosts, and to trick the public into buying the rationale. By drawing the parallel between North Korea's aggressive military hysteria and our own version of it, he shows how similarly power functions from country to country, regardless of the system.

DOUG MILAM
Chicago, Illinois

STAR-STUDDED

CONGRATULATIONS to James Wolcott for criticizing *Sex and the City* ["Twinkle, Twinkle, Darren Star," January]. He left out some major points, though. All four of the main characters are educated and independent, yet they have no interests aside from men and maxing out their credit cards on designer shoes. They act like children in their preoccupation with only themselves. The one character who on occasion gets frustrated with their shallowness is Miranda, and she is branded "judgmental." I don't understand why this show is perceived to be a novel way of portraying women. It would be more groundbreaking to depict them as the full and flawed human beings they are, rather than as glib party girls.

HEATHER DUNCAN
Black Forest, Colorado

JAMES WOLCOTT SEEMS to be taking it all a bit too seriously. With *Sex and the City*, a show has finally come along that is blunt, irreverent, and, most important, entertaining, and all we can do is dig for negative implications that just aren't there. Comparing Carrie, Samantha, Charlotte, and Miranda to "gay men" because they "go to the gym, have sex, drink Cosmos, and shop" is ridiculous. Gay men did not invent these things, nor do they monopolize them now.

ELLEN BAR
New York, New York

ROCKETS AND RED TAPE

EDWARD KLEIN'S comprehensive report on U.S. counterintelligence failures, prosecutorial abuse, and weapons-technology transfers ["The Hunting of Wen Ho Lee," December] very properly posed the question "How could President Clinton say he was 'quite troubled' by the way Lee had been treated, when his administration had meted out the treatment?"

Klein's article makes only passing reference to the bipartisan and unanimous report of the Select Committee on U.S. National Security that examined technology transfer to the People's Republic of China. This is understandable, since Wen Ho Lee was not the subject of the Select Committee investigation. Indeed, his name does not appear in the document, and he was unknown to the committee. However, by stating that reports in *The New York Times* "that the illegal transfer of American satellite technology had advanced Beijing's ballistic-missile program" were "never proved," without reporting the subsequent unanimous conclusion of the five Republicans and four Democrats on the Select Committee, the article presented an incomplete account.

The Select Committee reported that "in the aftermath of three failed satellite launches since 1992, U.S. satellite manufacturers transferred missile design information and know-how to the P.R.C. without obtaining the legally required licenses. This information has improved the reliability of P.R.C. rockets useful for civilian and military purposes."

The article also incorrectly asserted that the Select Committee investigation was "swayed" by a "Blue Team" of "conservative intellectuals, congressional staffers, Republican operatives, and former intelligence officers."

The investigation was in fact conducted by a nonpartisan joint staff whose every member had been CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 104 approved by both the Republican and the Democratic committee leadership. The chief investigative counsel, who directed the joint staff, was the deputy inspector general of the C.I.A. and was detailed to this work by the Clinton administration. The committee's general counsel had previously served as President Carter's general counsel at both the C.I.A. and the N.S.A. [National Security Agency]. Indeed, virtually all the members of the entire investigative staff who wrote the Select Committee report were detailees from the Clinton administration. It was because of the unprecedented bipartisan nature of the committee's organization that its work, including the final report, was unanimous.

A final note is that the sole statement of mine quoted in the article was not on the subject of technology transfers but rather about the Clinton administration's record on human rights in China and it was not identified as such. The speech from which the statement is taken itemized the arrests of democratic leaders in China, the torture of priests, the censorship of the Internet, and the Clinton administration's failed policies to deal with such human-rights abuses.

When Energy Secretary Bill Richardson publicly discharged Lee from his job in March 1999, I criticized it as un-American. I also warned against a looming "Richard Jewell" problem—that is, trial and conviction in the press. My comments were widely reported in the media.

The Select Committee drew much-needed attention to security problems at the national weapons laboratories and other matters related to proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Twenty-eight Select Committee recommendations were imple- CONTINUED ON PAGE 114



ROCK OF AGES: Yousuf Karsh and his assistant set up the camera as Edward Steichen sits for his portrait at his farm in Ridgefield, Connecticut, 1965.

SHOOTING EDWARD STEICHEN

Being on the other side of the camera from Bruce Weber was a joy, and I reveled in his enthusiasm. I was touched to learn that, as a young boy, he knew my photographs through his father's books of my work ["Shooting Past 80," by David Friend, January]. I well remember having similar feelings when I first photographed Edward Steichen.

My wife and I spent weekends with Steichen and his wife, Joanna, in their Connecticut home, and I think the only portraits he made after his retirement from *Vanity Fair* were of my wife, Estrellita, and me.

I thank you for the privilege of being in your pages along with so many of my distinguished colleagues. Looking at their photographs and reading about them brought back many happy memories.

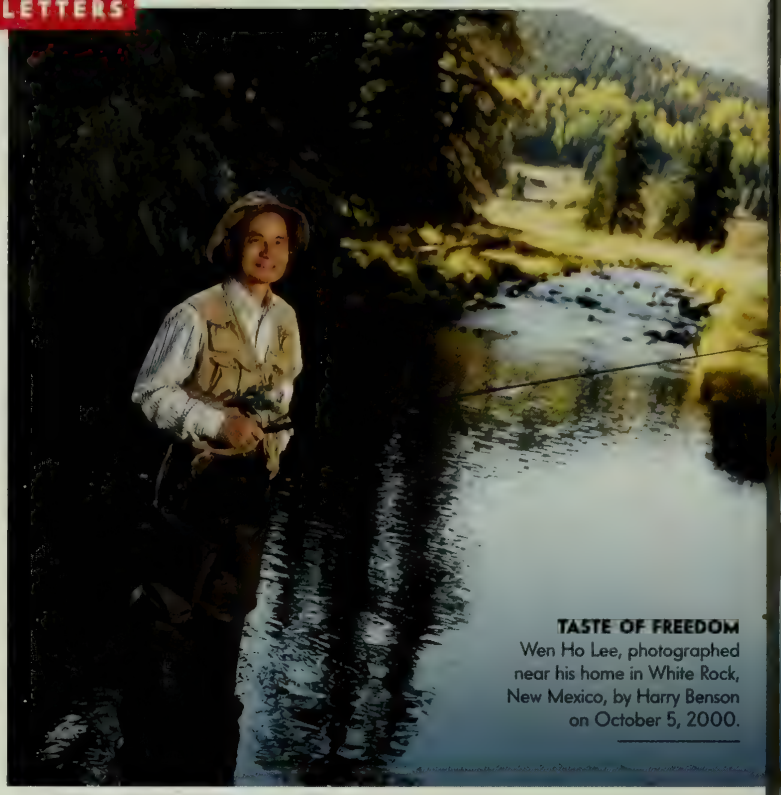
YOUSUF KARSH
Boston, Massachusetts


INDA ALLARD
LLEN TRACY






BE EVERYONE YOU ARE
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TASTE OF FREEDOM
Wen Ho Lee, photographed near his home in White Rock, New Mexico, by Harry Benson on October 5, 2000.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 108 mented. The most important of these reforms was the creation of the new National Nuclear Security Administration, which has taken responsibility for weapons security from the Department of Energy and will, it is hoped, prevent future lapses in security such as those that have occurred at the national weapons laboratories.

CHRISTOPHER COX
Member of Congress
Washington, D.C.

EDWARD KLEIN RESPONDS: Congressman Cox's "nonpartisan" hearings were, in fact, held in a highly charged political atmosphere. As I reported, just as the struggle over Bill Clinton's impeachment was reaching its climax, the Republican-controlled Congress seized on sketchy intelligence reports of China's leap forward in ballistic-missile technology as an opportunity to strike at the wounded president and influence the 2000 election.

Newt Gingrich, then Speaker of the House, appointed Cox to investigate allegations that Bernard Schwartz, a major Democratic donor and chairman of Loral Space & Communications Ltd., had compromised national security by transferring classified technology to China. The clear target of the investigation was Clinton, but timorous Democrats on the committee, fearing charges of being soft on China, went along with the final report, parts of which were drafted by members of the Blue Team.

In his letter, Cox fails to mention that Schwartz and Loral were later exonerated by Congress of any wrongdoing, and that the Cox Report's findings have been repeatedly called into serious question by top intelligence officials.

Mr. Cox is right on one point: he denounced the president for giving Chinese leaders "the full Lewinsky" in a speech about human rights in China, not on the subject of technology transfers.

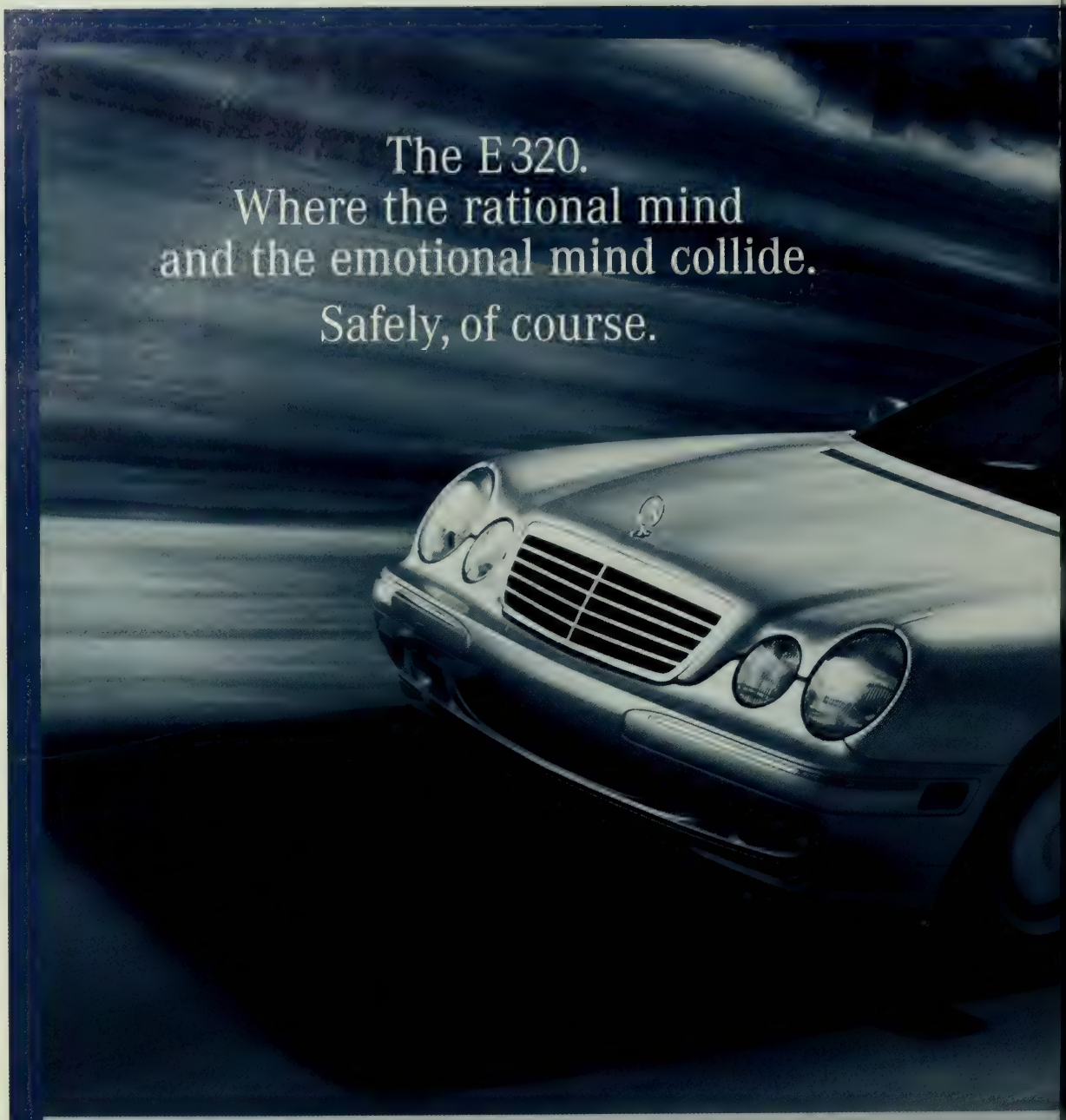
CORRECTION: In our entry on Jeff Bewkes in the 2000 New Establishment list (October), we wrote that HBO late-night personalities Chris Rock and Dennis Miller "attract larger audiences" than late-night broadcast competitors Jay Leno and Conan O'Brien. We neglected to specify that Rock's and Miller's audience advantages over Leno and O'Brien are in homes that subscribe to HBO.

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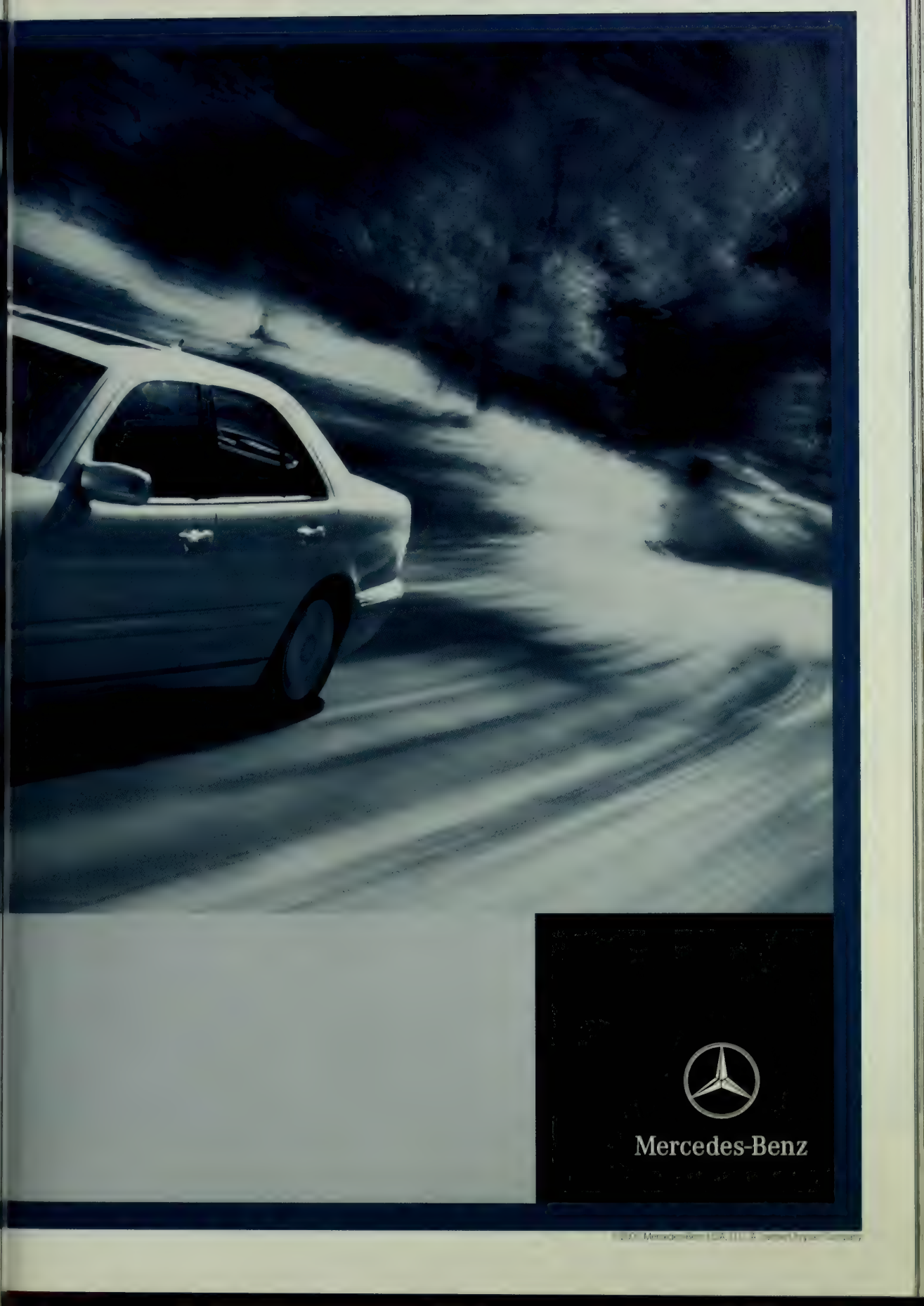
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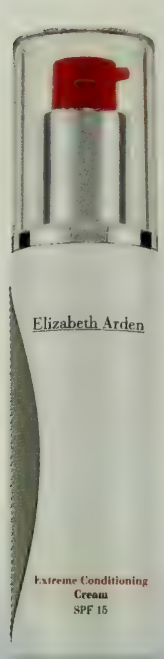
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March 2001

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on Angelina Jolie's *Original Sin*

on painter Gary Hume at Matthew Marks

finds Tracey Emin and Damien Hirst on-line

tracks London's hit *Stones in His Pockets* to Broadway

Williamsburg unplugged, a postcard from Paris,

and Hot Type

Dapper Don

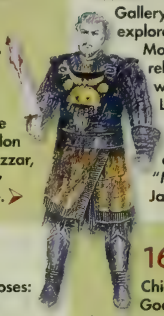
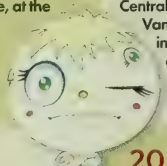
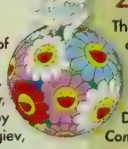
Siberian baritone Dmitri Hvorostovsky, photographed on the Hudson River in November 1999, is at the Metropolitan Opera in New York this month singing the role of Germont Sr. in Verdi's *La Traviata*. Next month PBS's *Great Performances* will air *Don Giovanni Unmasked*, a one-hour film adaptation of Mozart's masterpiece, in which the handsome Russian stars as both Don Giovanni and his crafty servant, Leporello.

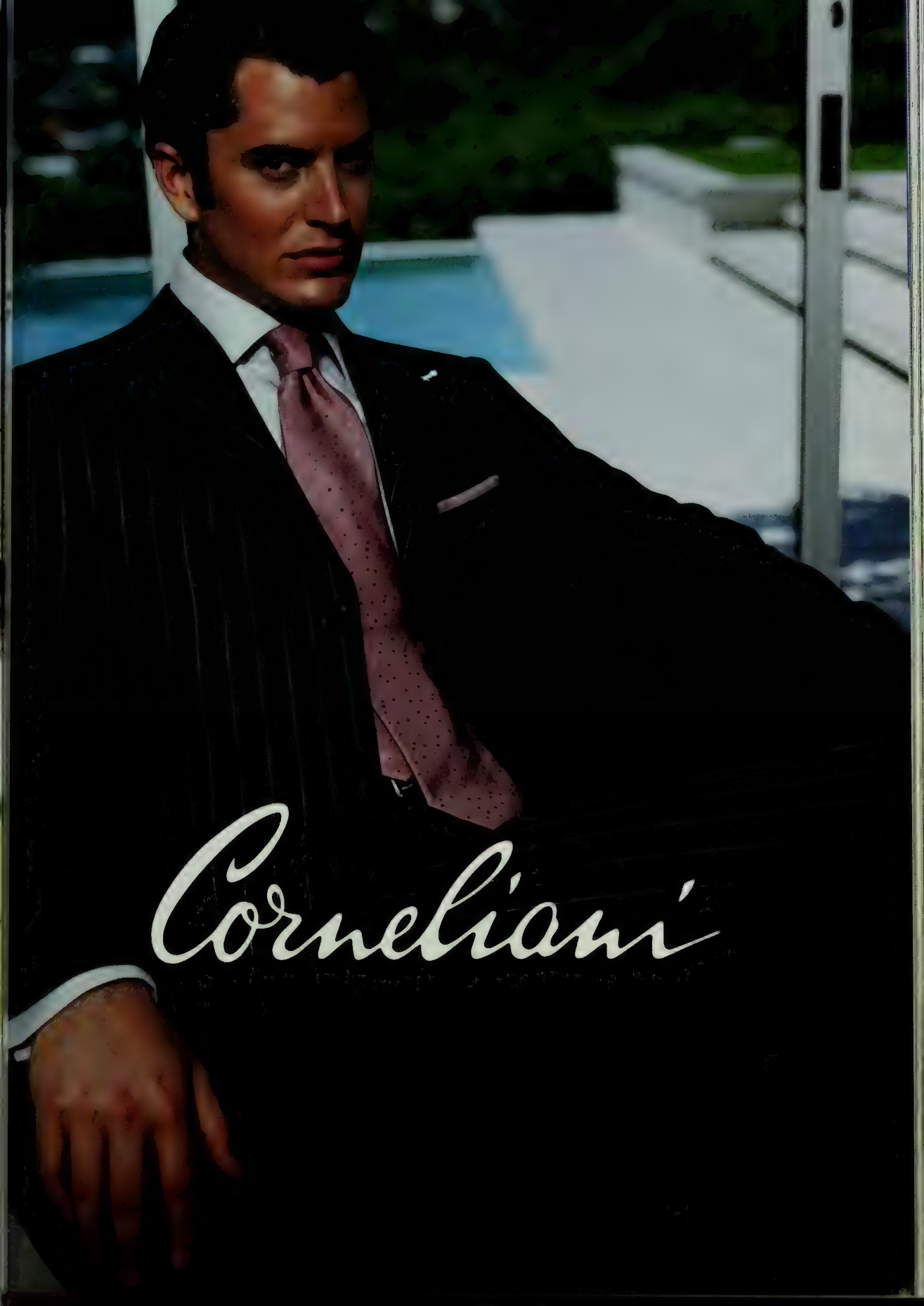


PHOTOGRAPH BY RODNEY SMITH

March

SPRINGTIME FOR HITLER, OSCAR-TIME FOR STEVE MARTIN, AND SHOWTIME FOR NEBUCHADNEZZAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				**1** New York's Lyceum Theatre previews a play from Tom Stoppard called *The Invention of Love*, starring Robert Sean Leonard. 	**2** The Brooklyn Museum of Art honors its home borough with "A Family Album: Brooklyn Collects," an exhibition of items from various collectors.	**3** Futurama I: The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art's "010101: Art in Technological Times" charts developments in contemporary art, architecture, and design as they evolve in a digital world.
4 The first full retrospective in America of German photographer Andreas Gursky, whose work explores everything from techno raves to stock exchanges, opens at MoMA. 	**5** A rainbow in Raleigh: The North Carolina Museum of Art's exhibition of modernist painter Stanton Macdonald-Wright opened yesterday.	**6** L.A.'s J. Paul Getty Museum launches its exhibition of portraits by German realist photographer August Sander, a contemporary of Josef von Sternberg, Bertolt Brecht, and Thomas Mann.		**8** For the first time in 40 years, the Metropolitan Opera opens a production of Verdi's *Nabucco*, an epic about the King of Babylon Nebuchadnezzar, conducted by James Levine. 	**9** Australia's National Gallery of Art explores Claude Monet's relationship with the Land of the Rising Sun in the exhibition "Monet and Japan."	**10** Violinist Isaac Stern celebrates his 80th birthday at the Kennedy Center, while the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis celebrates a different kind of musician with "Yes Yoko Ono." 
11 Citizens of Houston should prepare for an influx of sci-fi enthusiasts as the Museum of Fine Arts opens "*Star Wars*: The Magic of Myth." 	**12** Christie's Los Angeles holds a three-day estate auction of hypermaximalist artist, decorator, and set designer Tony Duquette, at the Santa Monica Airport. 	**13** New York commuters might find their spirits lifted as sculptor Takashi Murakami unveils a new installation at Grand Central Terminal's Vanderbilt Hall, including a cartoon ball of happy daisies.	**14** Boston's Museum of Fine Arts gets dressed up with "From Head to Toe: Selections from the Costume Collection." 	**15** Go down, Moses: The National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C., exhibits the work of self-taught artist Anna Mary Robertson "Grandma" Moses.	**16** Chicago's Goodman Theatre previews a revival of James Baldwin's 1954 play, *The Amen Corner*, directed by Chuck Smith. 	**17** St. Patrick's Day. New Yorkers wary of the parade can celebrate with the Celtic group the Chieftains at Carnegie Hall. 
18 Soprano Heidi Grant Murphy dedicates a night to the works of opera composer Lukas Foss at Weill Recital Hall in New York.	**19** A new production of Prokofiev's 1917 opera, *The Gambler*, conducted by Valery Gergiev, premieres at Lincoln Center. 	**20** The Royal Academy of Arts's exhibition of Botticelli's 92 surviving illustrations for Dante's *Divine Comedy* (shown together in public for the first time) opened this weekend and runs through June 10.	**21** Spring begins with a shower of camp and kitsch: the St. James Theater in New York begins previews for the stage adaptation of Mel Brooks's *The Producers*, starring Nathan Lane and Matthew Broderick.	**22** Fresh off his "flower puppy" installation at Rockefeller Center, Jeff Koons displays new paintings at the Gagosian Gallery in Los Angeles. 	**23** The Miami Art Museum hosts an exhibition of L.A. artist Ed Ruscha's work, which focuses on language, vernacular culture, and mass media.	**24** Space odyssey: The Art Institute of Chicago launches "2001: Building for Space Travel," which explores the evolution of and projected visions for the architecture of space travel. 
25 Oscar Night. Best-selling novelist Steve Martin, who may or may not revive his arrow-through-the-head gag, hosts the Academy Awards show at L.A.'s Shrine Auditorium. 	**26** Futurama II: The Whitney's "BitStreams," which surveys the digital-art world with work from the likes of video artists Diana Thater, Jeremy Blake, and Paul Pfeiffer, opened last week and runs through June 10.	**27** The Met's "William Blake" opens this week and is the first major exhibition of the British Romantic printmaker, poet, and painter in the U.S. in more than 20 years.		**29** In what is sure to be a new standard for interpretive dance, the Boston Ballet debuts its production of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. 		**31** Washington, D.C.'s Corcoran Gallery of Art opens "Willem de Kooning: In Process," which demonstrates the Abstract Expressionist's artistic process.


Corneliani




Cornelian


Cornelian



HOT TYPE

ELISSA SCHAPPELL

People are strange. Surfer **Katie Arnoldi** takes the beach of the lit scene with *Chemical Pink* (Forge), a modern gothic comedy of obsession, in which a female bodybuilder submits to the twisted whims of a rich eccentric who wants to shape her future, literally.

Also this month: Take two affirmations and call me in the morning—**Dharma Singh Khalsa, M.D.,** and **Cameron Stauth's** *Meditation as Medicine* (Pocket Books) offers H.M.O.-weary souls a prescription for chanting oneself into the pink. No, Candace Bushnell isn't doing landscapes; *The Art of the Tart* (Random House) is **Tamasin Day-Lewis's** sumptuous dessert-by-the-numbers guide to such dainties as rhubarb meringue pie. **Muriel Spark's** artful and amusing *Aiding and Abetting* (Doubleday) is based on the notorious true story of Lord Lucan, who bludgeoned his children's nanny while gunning for his wife. The Methuselah of Simpsonia, the hulking *Simpsons Comics Royale* (HarperCollins) is agush with bumptious adventures and cracks by creator **Matt Groening.** Captain of the space race and NASA flight director **Chris Kraft's** memoir, *Flight* (Dutton), blasts one back to the time of the Mercury and Apollo missions. Acclaimed novelist **Alison Lurie** summons *Familiar Spirits* (Viking) from beyond the earthly realm in her memoir of James Merrill and his lover David Jackson's obsession with Ouija boards and the supernatural. Consider how the dark arts influenced **James Merrill's** witty and elegant poetry and life in his *Collected Poems* (Knopf), edited by **J. D. McClatchy** and **Stephen Yenser.** In **Pat Barker's** *Border Crossing* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux), a child psychiatrist is plagued by misgivings after saving the life of a child murderer he once, perhaps inaccurately, testified against. **Nell Casey's** *Unholy Ghost* (Morrow) collects musings on depression by writers such as William Styron and Ann Beattie. Unrevealed tales from a mother's sullied past haunt a sensitive New England teenager in **John Searles's** debut, *Boy Still Missing* (Morrow). Unnerve thyself: the violent and enthralling short stories in **Terese Svoboda's** *Trailer Girl* (Counterpoint) detonate on contact. *The Flaneur* (Bloomsbury) is an invitation from **Edmund White** to saunter through Paris—city of café layabouts and ambling virtuosos. In **Lee Hill's** *A Grand Guy* (HarperCollins), the mad satiric genius of Terry Southern, controversial collaborator on screenplays for *Dr. Strangelove, Easy Rider,* and *Barbarella,* crackles and burns on the page. The unorthodox graphic designs of Art Chantry—from his work for social causes to his album covers for Mudhoney—rock **Julie Lasky's** *Some People Can't Surf* (Chronicle). In *The Last Days of Haute Cuisine* (Viking), gastronome **Patric Kuh** serves up the tale of America's culinary revolution, a ripe and intoxicating *coulis* of history, humor, and dish. **Christina Chiu** makes a truly auspicious fiction debut with *Troublemaker and Other Saints* (Putnam). *Robert Mitchum: "Baby, I Don't Care"* (St. Martin's)—thus spake the consummate hipster and *noir* icon in **Lee Server's** bio of the original dreamy bad boy, the dope-toking hard-drinking womanizer who went from hobo to Hollywood. "I told everything I know to the Los Angeles Police Department." Yeah, baby, yeah.





Clockwise from top left: Katie Arnoldi, photographed in L.A., December 2000; Dr. Dharma Singh Khalsa, photographed in Tucson, Arizona, January 2001; Robert Mitchum in *His Kind of Woman,* 1951; an Art Chantry poster for a 1982 Bathhouse Theatre production of *Macbeth.*

BY JOSEF ASTOR FOR DETAILS SEE CREDITS PAGE



SURVIVOR TOO
Brooke Smith stars as reigning champ Dawn Lagarto in *Series 7*.

Reality Bites

DANIEL MINAHAN TAKES ON VOYEUR TV WITH *SERIES 7*

What if the contestants on a reality-TV show were really out to kill one another? By rights, that premise should be stale toast, not the engine of a dazzling and original dark satire, but such are the rewards of being lured to places you never wanted to go. Shot entirely in digital video and presented as if it were a marathon rebroadcast of a fictional program's seventh-season highlights, *Series 7* rips open television's hottest trend and drags every viewer into its debauchery.

The logic of the film's invented hit "reality" show is simple: if camera crews distributed handguns to six randomly selected citizens, the contestants would consent to start killing one another simply to be the last one standing. In this round, the reigning champ, played by **Brooke Smith,** has been returned to her dull, featureless hometown for her latest tour of producer-induced combat. Trigger-happy and immensely pregnant, she will have to overcome, among other rivals, an elf-size demonic nurse and a former high-school soul mate who's now dying of cancer.

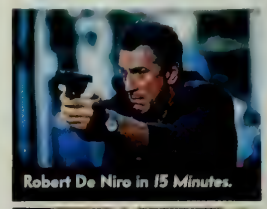
HOT REELS

Writer-director **Daniel Minahan** eventually parodies every convention of exploitation TV, but not at the expense of easy targets such as media giants and organized religion. He demands instead that we confront the small absurdities each of us accumulates in sustaining these stories that lend structure, meaning, and, yes, even dramatic sparkle to our lives. An equally powerful indictment of our culture of death might be expected from **the Pope.** But, heck, a papal scolding could never be this entertaining. **(Rating:** ★★★½**)** —CHRIS MITCHELL

Also This Month . . .

FAME-OBSESSED KILLERS, MEN BEHAVING BADLY, AND A CURSED PISTOL

Brad Pitt plays a bumbling gangster sent south of the border to retrieve a legendarily cursed pistol in **The Mexican,** with Julia Roberts as Pitt's long-suffering girlfriend. America's obsession with fame is explored in **15 Minutes** as Robert De Niro and Ed Burns play tough-as-nails New York City investigators tracking down two serial killers intent on getting their Warholian due. Kelsey Grammer portrays an amoral tabloid-news anchor hindering the case. Based on the novel by Laura Zigman, **Animal Husbandry** stars Ashley Judd as a television producer turned woman scorned who begins to study the noncommittal behavior of men as compared with the male members of other species in the animal kingdom. Her subjects include Greg Kinnear and Hugh Jackman. In another, less scientific examination of modern relationships, **Town & Country** features Warren Beatty, Goldie Hawn, Diane Keaton, and Garry Shandling as four married urbanites discovering the joys of a midlife crisis. **Enemy at the Gates,** Jean-Jacques Annaud's World War II drama about the Battle of Stalingrad, stars Jude Law as the famed Russian sniper Vassili Zaitsev, who recorded 242 kills during the decisive confrontation. *Rashomon* meets *Cheers:* In the comedy **One Night at McCool's** three love-struck midwesterners—played by Matt Dillon, Paul Reiser, and John Goodman—give separate versions of a fateful evening at a popular watering hole, each revolving around the object of their obsession, a femme fatale portrayed by Liv Tyler. —JOHN GILLIES



Robert De Niro in *15 Minutes*.



Matt Dillon and Liv Tyler in *One Night at McCool's*.



Brad Pitt and Julia Roberts in *The Mexican*.



COMING ATTRACTIONS

Angelina Jolie and Antonio Banderas get comfortable in *Original Sin*.

Trailer of the month: Original Sin **Directed by:** Michael Cristofer **Starring:** Antonio Banderas, Angelina Jolie **Coming to a theater near you:** February 23 **The lowdown:** Angie Lam period costume drama. Dishes (fantastic name) meets Lisa Ann Walter, spending a night of torrid confessions, behavioral mirrors, spanish dungeons, and intense sex in sitting. **Moneyliner galore:** "Trust the universe. I can feel it, I know it!" (He denies.) "Do you believe this passion can ever be unfair?" (Jolie) "I gave you all the keys in the house—the keys to his heart and will have to steal his money!" (Unbelievable female character twist.) **It's a Banderas vehicle because:** He rides a motorcycle, drives a vintage car, speaks flamenco. He tantalizes us with pencil and women's pants. He wears one of those hot hemmed white shirts casually unbuttoned to show some chest. **It's a Jolie vehicle because:** She appears naked (under sheet and creamy shoulder). She surrenders her virtue with body paint and sprinkles. She rips out Banderas's heart and crushes it. **Forget endurance:** Dialogue, Romance—addicted male spectators. Straight male professionals who dabble in Jolie look-alikes. (Stay tuned on the Internet for our Jolie Halloween costume.) **(Rating:** ★★★**)** —MARK ELIOT



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Hume for More

THE CANDY HUES OF GARY HUME



HOT TIN PROOF
Standing Head, 2000, enamel on aluminum, 54 in. by 39 in., by Gary Hume, *far right*.

He has been called the "painter of now"; at 38, **Gary Hume** is one of the original Y.B.A.'s (Young British Artists). Turner Prize finalist, 1999 U.K. representative to the Venice Biennale, Goldsmiths College alumnus, Hume is part of the changing of the guard in the British art world as the youth become the Establishment.

This spring, New York's Matthew Marks Gallery exhibits a new series of Gary Hume's paintings, along with the artist's first sculptures—life-size painted bronze snowmen. Hume's paintings are absolute eye candy; his use of high-gloss enamel house paint makes for seductive surfaces that are slippery, lush, and as contemporary as it gets. The imagery is in constant motion—as though viscous, pouring itself back and forth from liquid to solid, abstract to figure.



"He's one of the few painters that's somehow able to develop a new language of painting," says dealer **Matthew Marks.** There is a paradoxical Warholian quality to the work; it's everything and nothing all at once—acquiring substance and depth by skating on the surface, peeling off the epithelial layer of pop culture and applying it not to canvas but to sheets of aluminum.

From the very start, Hume has not been afraid of making beautiful work. "It was a conscious decision," he says. "I didn't feel like I'd be very good at 'not beauty.' The world is so full of people excellent at offering up ugliness, whether it be some artist or the mugger down your street. And I just knew I was never going to be as eloquent as the mugger." Marks says, "For Gary Hume, 'beauty' is not a dirty word." —A. M. HOMES

Canvasing the Web

ART ON-LINE: THE DOT-CALM AFTER THE STORM



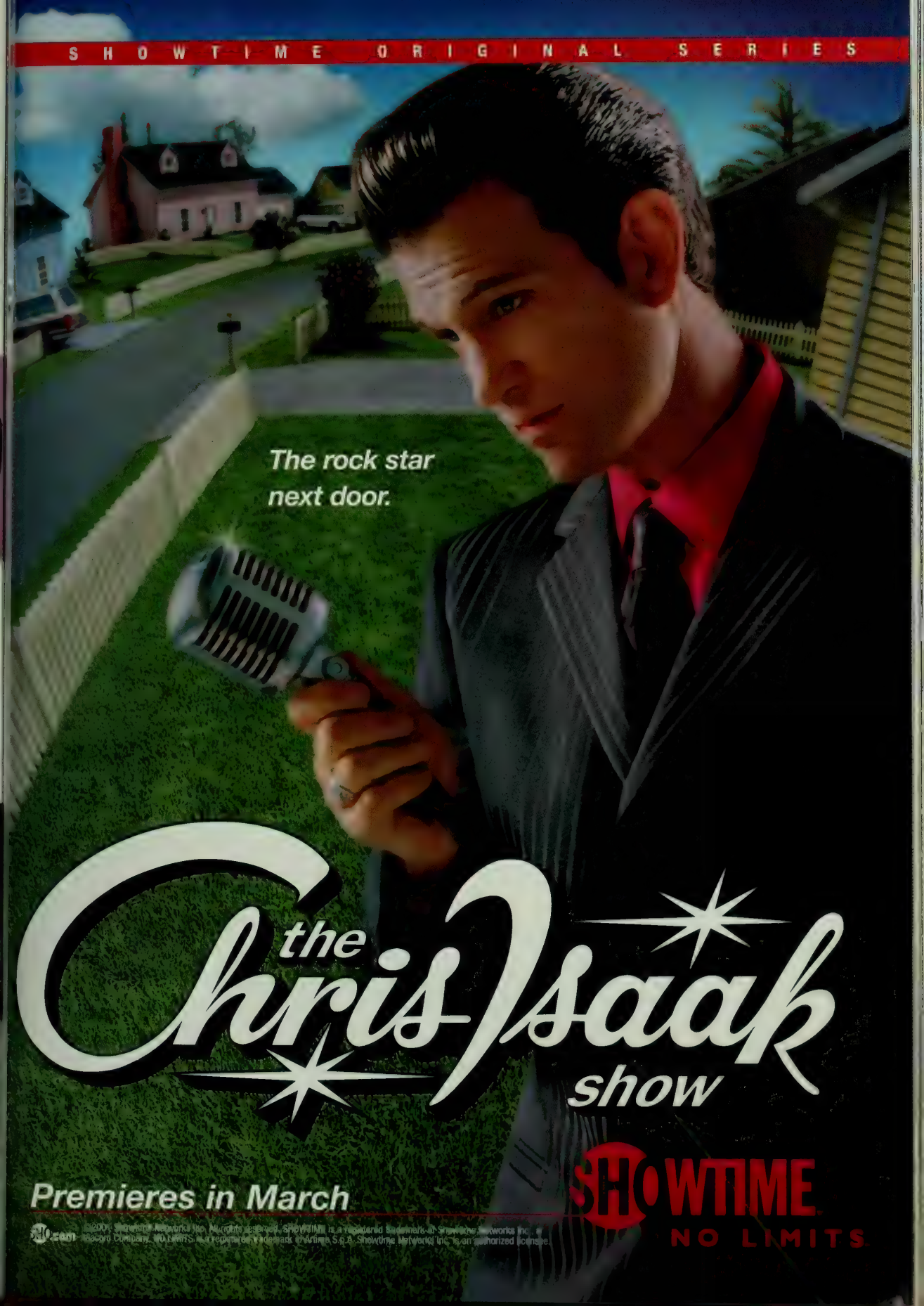
Now that dot-com is a synonym for Chapter 11, selling contemporary art on the Internet is showing signs of succeeding where e-tailers of dog food and diamond tiaras have spectacularly failed. Scores of established artists, from **Jeff Koons** to **Damien Hirst**, **Elizabeth Peyton** to **Christopher Wool**, have embraced the Web via two new dot-com firms founded by art-world insiders, Eyestorm and Counter Editions. The signed, limited—but not that limited—editions on offer are generally specially commissioned, but Wal-Mart-meets-**Chris-Ofili's**-elephant-dung it's not: "We're aiming for people who have at least heard of artists we've chosen," says Counter's **Matthew Slotover.** Fancy a **Tracey Emin** but don't know where to turn? Intimidated by fierce gallery queens? A framed print of Emin's *Dog Brains* is for sale at Counter for $662. The artists themselves seem to love the global accessibility of their work and, presumably, the monthly sales statement and check. "**Helmut Newton,** who did a special portfolio for us, had never seen the Internet until we showed it to him," says Eyestorm co-founder **David Grob.** The success of both firms—**Charles R. Schwab** recently invested $2 million in Eyestorm—confirms that enthusiasm for contemporary art is not limited to a few wealthy collectors. Can e-art triumph where e-furniture failed? "The creativity of the artists drives the business," says Eyestorm's **Don Smith.** "When you get into couches, who the hell is going to get sexy about the next chesterfield anyway?" —EDWARD HELMORE







DOT-COMMODITIES
Clockwise from far left: a 1963 photograph by Jeanloup Sieff; *Dolly Parton*, 1985, by Andy Warhol; *Andy Warhol*, 1986, by Greg Gorman; and *Edward Kennedy*, 1979, by Andy Warhol.


SHOWTIME ORIGINAL SERIES
The rock star next door.
the Chris Isaak show
Premieres in March
SHOWTIME
NO LIMITS

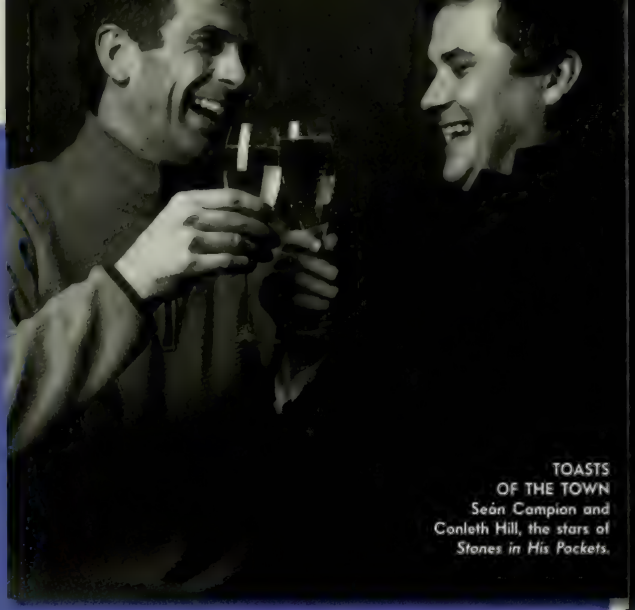
Stepping Stones

LONDON'S HIT *STONES IN HIS POCKETS* LEAPS ACROSS THE POND

At a time when the imagination of the mass audience becomes lazier with each new special effect, it is encouraging to find two actors who are prepared to go out onstage with nothing but a row of old shoes, a trunk, and a couple of chairs to create 15 different characters—and to produce one of the big hits of London's West End during 2000. **Conleth Hill's** and **Seán Campion's** performances in **Marie Jones's** *Stones in His Pockets* have at times a vertiginous bravura, as they slide from the main parts—Charlie Conlon and Jake Quinn, two extras on a film set in Ireland—to inhabit roles that include the director, the silkily insincere star, her bodyguard, and an ancient extra called Mickey.

This is an actors' play—written by an actress and directed by her actor husband, **Ian McElhinney**—and it rejoices in their almost supernatural skills of evocation. That is probably why the two-hander, which started out in Belfast and opens on Broadway at the end of March, has been such a success with their profession. Among those to seek out the play early were **Tom Hanks, Dustin Hoffman, Rod Steiger, Andie MacDowell, Kevin Spacey,** and **Tracey Ullman.**

Stones in His Pockets is a rare case where the writing works as deftly as the acting, where a phrase is as instantly evocative as a gesture or a glance. Marie Jones is very funny, and her observations of the hectic compression of a film set are dead on. But with all the joy of the *craic*—you won't ever see anything as funny as the Irish jig in the wedding scene—she never lets you forget the tragedy of a young extra who has been ejected from his local pub by the starlet's bodyguard and commits suicide by walking into a river with stones in his pockets. —HENRY PORTER



TOASTS OF THE TOWN
Seán Campion and Conleth Hill, the stars of *Stones in His Pockets.*

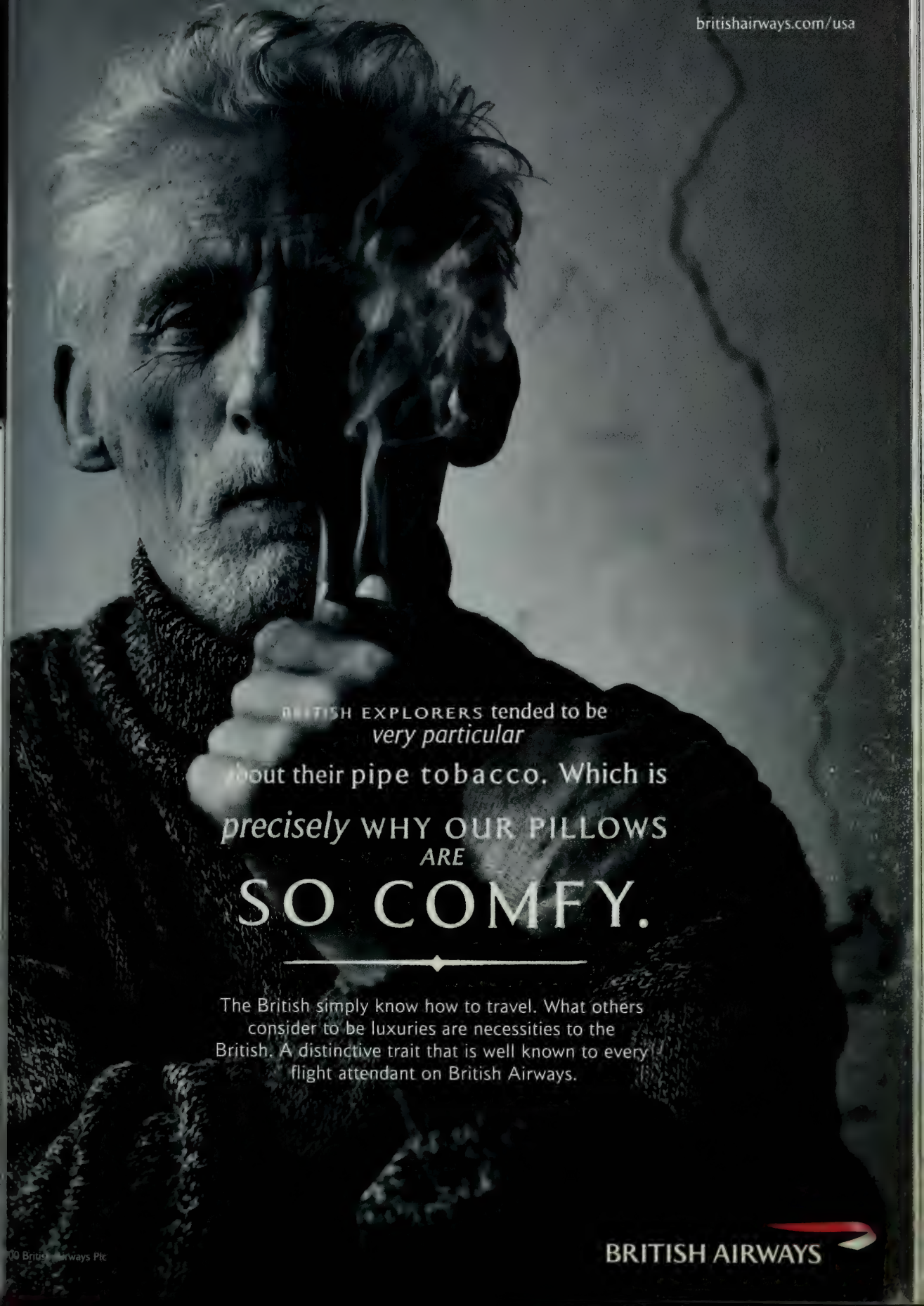


Postcard from Paris

BRAZILIAN D.J.'S, BUDDHIST MONKS, AND NEW YORK CHEESECAKE IN THE CITY OF LIGHTS

Le tout Paris is abuzz over **59 Poincaré** (59 Avenue Raymond Poincaré), left in the wake of Alain Ducasse's move to the Plaza Athénée and decorated by Patrick Jouin.... Hubert Boukobza of Les Bains Douches has opened **Korova** (33 Rue Marbeuf), a futuristic bar and restaurant named after the milk bar in *A Clockwork Orange*.... Paris has long had a Brazilian fetish—D.J. Gringo da Parada still spins four nights a week at **Favela Chic** (18 Rue du Faubourg du Temple)—but lately the city has gone mad for Thai: **Baan Boran** (43 Rue de Montpensier) has been blessed by Buddhist monks.... L'Hôtel Guy-Louis Duboucheron, where Oscar Wilde died a hundred years ago, is now simply **L'Hôtel** (13 Rue des Beaux-Arts), completely redecorated by Jacques Garcia.... The Quai de Valmy is Paris's answer to Nolita: designers Martine Senac and Alexandre Gattegno have opened **Antoine et Lili** (95 Quai de Valmy)—a three-part boutique selling clothes, antiques, and cheesecake—and the **ICAR Foundation** (159 Quai de Valmy) shows William de Lottie this month.... Seven galleries have sprouted on Rue Louise Weiss, and art-world stalwart **Yvon Lambert** (108 Rue Vieille du Temple) shows Richard Tuttle and Fiorenza Menini this month, while **Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac** (7 Rue Debelleyme) shows Gerwald Rockenschaub.... "Les Années Pop," a vast retrospective of the Pop years sponsored by Yves Saint Laurent and Gucci, opens March 15 at **Centre Georges Pompidou.** Head to the top to eat at **Georges,** a Costes-brothers special with a view of all of Paris.... Ooh la la!

PHOTOGRAPHS TOP BY GRAHAM P. GOOT


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The Williamsburg Boom

A SPREE GROWS IN BROOKLYN



The Domino Sugar refinery and the spice factory on Berry Street are two of the few industrial plants still operating in Williamsburg, New York. While sugar and spice have persisted in Brooklyn's northwest corner, it was only recently that everything nice started making a comeback. Since the Schaeffer Brewery closed in 1976, empty warehouses have dotted the waterfront (once upon a time a resort frequented by Cornelius Vanderbilt and William C. Whitney), but Manhattan's soaring rents and booming art market have conspired to fill them up again, giving rise to New York's hottest art enclave since SoHo in the 1970s. Galapagos, a bar/performance space with its own reflecting pool, is housed in an old mayonnaise factory. Planet Thailand, the neighborhood's first destination restaurant (excluding the formidable Peter Luger's, godfather of steak houses since 1887), has moved to a former metal-stamping factory. Three of the best new restaurants—Relish, Miss Williamsburg Diner, and Diner—are converted

Borough Fare

1. See illustration above.
2. Enid's.
3. Pete's Candy Store.
4. Flipside Gallery.
5. Beacon's Closet.
6. Union Pool.
7. Fish Tank Gallery.
8. Galapagos.
9. Black Betty.
10. Miss Williamsburg Diner.
11. Relish.
12. The Stinger Club.
13. Cosmos.
14. Moon River Chattel.
15. This Is a Junk Shop.
16. Holland Tunnel gallery.
17. Peter Luger's.
18. Diner.



MAP ILLUSTRATIONS BY RODICA PRATO

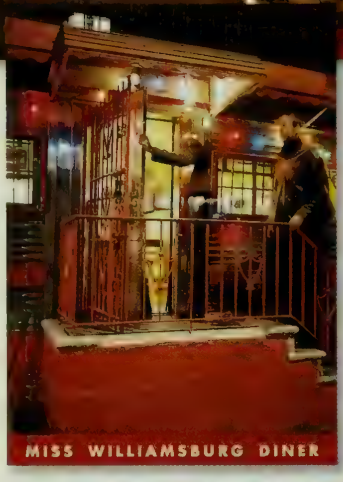

BAL HARBOUR BEVERLY HI BUENOS AIRES COSTA MESA HONOLULU
LAS VEGAS MANHASSET MAUI MEXICO CITY MONTERREY NASSAU
PUNTA DEL ESTE STAMFORD VANCOUVER WAIKIKI



MOMENTA ART


OZNOT'S DISH


PETE'S CANDY STORE


MISS WILLIAMSBURG DINER

The Williamsburg Boom

(CONTINUED)

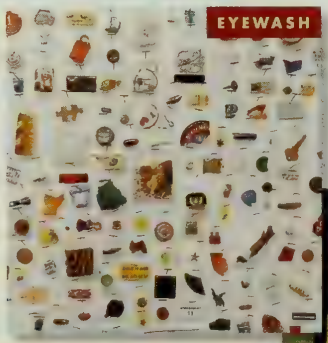
stainless-steel dining cars that once catered to the noon-whistle crowd. And the Girdle Factory, a vintage-clothing boutique, didn't even change its former occupant's name. Galleries such as Pierogi, Fish Tank, Momenta Art, Flipside, and Holland Tunnel (built in its proprietor's garden shed) keep the local artists thriving, and neighborhood bookstores Clovis Press, The Read, and Spoonbill & Sugartown Books are bucking the national trend against independent booksellers. Retro furniture abounds (at Moon River Chattel, Cosmos, and This Is a Junk Shop), and there's even a mini-mall, home to the neighborhood's pioneer music store, Earwax Records, and the quaint and eccentric Mini-Mini Market. At this rate, can a multiplex be far behind?

—ANNE FULENWIDER


THE GIRDLE FACTORY


THE STINGER CLUB

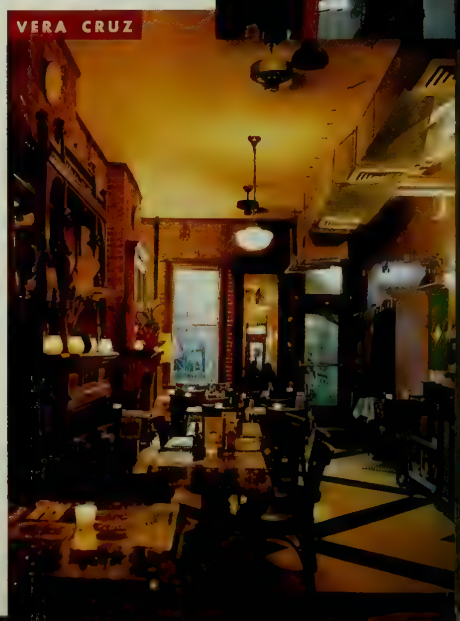

FISH TANK GAL


EYEWASH



UNION POOL


SPOONBILL & SUGARTOWN BOOKS

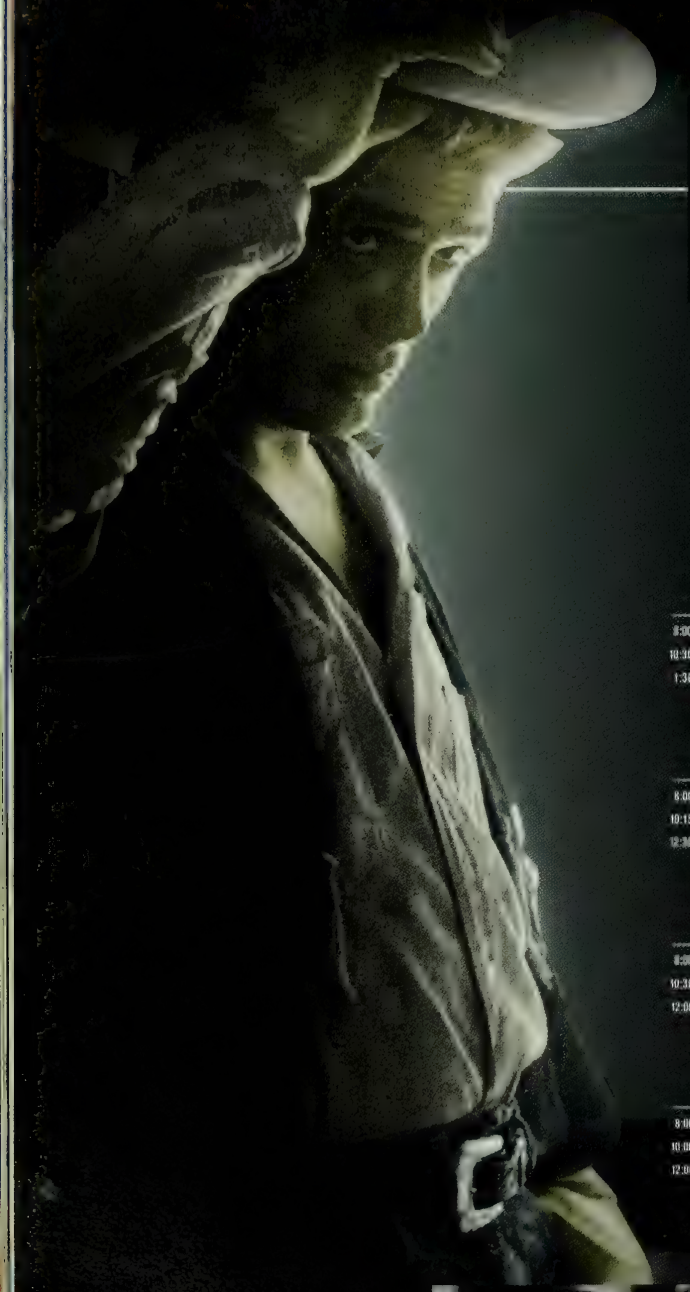

VERA CRUZ

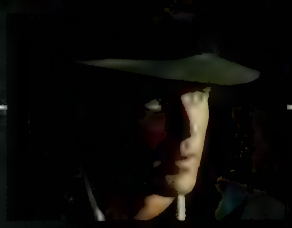
PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRIAN DOBEN


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T U R N E R C L A S S I C

964 NOMINATIONS. 353 ACADEMY AWARDS







SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY

MARCH 2001

PRIMETIME HIGHLIGHTS ALL TIMES EASTERN

4
8:00pm 2001: A Space Odyssey
10:30pm The Guns of Navarone
1:30am Destination Moon

5
8:00pm Days of Wine and Roses
10:00pm Evita
12:30am Arthur

6
8:00pm Seven Brides for Seven Brothers
10:00pm On the Town
12:00am A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum

11
8:00pm Northwest Mounted Police
10:15pm Sergeant York
12:30am Jaws

12
8:00pm Some Like It Hot
10:30pm Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?
1:00am The Night of the Iguana

13
8:00pm Pride and Prejudice
10:00pm Little Women ('49)
12:15am Lost Horizon

18
8:00pm Citizen Kane
10:30pm The Producers
12:00am The Bachelor and the Bobby-Soxer

19
8:00pm Ben-Hur ('59)
12:00am Annie Hall
2:00am The Broadway Melody

20
8:00pm Chariots of Fire
10:30pm Oliver!
1:30am Mrs. Miniver

25
8:00pm Meet Me in St. Louis
10:00pm Possessed
12:00am Singin' in the Rain
73rd Academy Awards® (on ABC)

26
8:00pm The Alamo
11:30pm The Bells of St. Mary's
2:00am San Francisco

27
8:00pm It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World
11:30pm The Dirty Dozen
2:30am Grand Prix







Watch *Giant* (1956), *The Sting* (1973), *Annie Hall* (1977), *Philadelphia* (1993), *Wa[illegible] Story* (1961), *Casablanca* (1942), *The Graduate* (1967), *Now,Voyager* (1942), *Moonstruck* (1987), *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1962) and *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) on TCM. "Academy Awards®" and "Oscar(s)®" are registered trademarks and service marks of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

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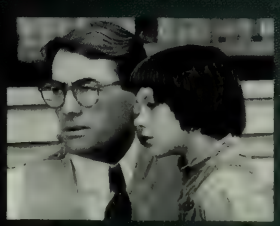


31 DAYS of OSCAR®

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 8:00pm Paper Moon 10:00pm For Whom the Bell Tolls 1:00am Murder on the Orient Express	**2** 8:00pm She Wore a Yellow Ribbon 10:00pm Battleground 12:30am A River Runs Through It	**3** 8:00pm The Quiet Man 10:30pm Fiddler on the Roof 2:00am Bound for Glory
7 pm Breakfast at Tiffany's pm A Little Romance am Now, Voyager	**8** 8:00pm The Big Country 11:00pm The Barefoot Contessa 1:30am Being There	**9** 8:00pm Hud 10:00pm The Miracle Worker 12:00am Moonstruck	**10** 8:00pm Born Yesterday 10:00pm Gaslight 12:00am Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?
14 00pm To Kill A Mockingbird 00pm Elmer Gantry 30am Little Women ('33)	**15** 8:00pm The Treasure of the Sierra Madre 10:30pm The Graduate 12:30am Giant	**16** 8:00pm Separate Tables 10:00pm True Grit 12:30am Shine	**17** 8:00pm The Philadelphia Story 10:00pm Philadelphia 12:00am Cat Ballou
21 00pm From Here to Eternity 30pm Rocky 00am In the Heat of the Night	**22** 8:00pm The Apartment 10:30pm Out of Africa 1:30am An American in Paris	**23** 8:00pm Gone With the Wind 12:00am The Sting 2:15am Ordinary People	**24** 8:00pm West Side Story 11:00pm Casablanca 1:00am Mutiny on the Bounty ('35)
28 00pm Men Oncle 00pm 8½ 00am Desert Victory	**29** 8:00pm The Champ ('31) 9:30pm Manhattan Melodrama 11:30pm The Story of Louis Pasteur	**30** 8:00pm The Fortune Cookie 10:15pm Close Encounters of the Third Kind 12:45am The Defiant Ones	**31** 8:00pm The Jazz Singer ('27) 9:30pm The Search 11:30pm Seven Faces of Dr. Lao

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AOL Keyword: Oscars

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

THRONE OF CONTENTION

Most people think of Britain's monarchy as a decorative tourist attraction. Not so: Queen Elizabeth II wields real power, encoded in archaic statutes—just like the U.S. electoral college. But as her subjects go to the polls, a famous attorney and a newspaper are using a new law to challenge her reign





ROYALS CHALLENGED At Buckingham Palace after her coronation, Queen Elizabeth is surrounded by the royal family, including young Prince Charles and Princess Anne, June 1953. *Inset, The Guardian* challenges the Crown, December 6, 2000.

A country that has a Royal Mint and a National Debt. That was the dry verdict on his beloved and servile England rendered by William Cobbett, one of the best of the 19th-century pamphleteers. So it goes, even today. The latent power of the monarchy is obscured by the widespread belief that it has no power at all.

In a few weeks' time the British will likely go to the polls to pass a verdict on Tony Blair. If this election by any chance ends in a tie or a dead heat or a draw or just an incredible and unprecedented foul-up, the referee will not be any judge or panel of judges, let alone any local or national legislature or trumped-up electoral college. It will be Elizabeth Regina, Her Royal Highness, who by law—and in her other capacities as head of the Church of England and head of the armed forces—decides which politician is summoned to the palace and there awarded the office that makes him her first (or prime) minister. Indeed, neither contender for that exalted position can claim it, even with a landslide of popular votes or parliamentary seats, until he has formally been invited to kiss her hands. Nor could the election have been called in the first

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All of this is antique flummery and circumstance, of course, a mere decorative and archaic show that is put on to gratify the tourists. Except that it isn't, any more than the bizarre protocols of the American electoral college are the relics of a bygone age. The 1787 federal Constitution, which makes the United States a republic and potentially a democracy, is the outcome of a revolt against the 1701 Act of Settlement, which confirmed Great Britain as an imperial monarchy and potentially a democracy. And that Act of Settlement is about to undergo a crisis which, like the ghost in the machine of the United States Constitution, has been lurking there since its inception.



HEIRS, APPARENTLY Queen Elizabeth in 1958 with her heir, Prince Charles, and Princess Anne, now eighth in the line of succession.

The British statute book is clotted with medieval legislation that safeguards the powers and privileges of the Crown.

You can be born in the United Kingdom and have all the talent and skill and charm that one's heart could desire, but you may not—unlike anyone born in these United States—aspire to be the head of government. Not, that is, unless you meet the following conditions (which can be fulfilled without the talent and the skill and the charm). According to the Act of Settlement, you must number yourself among the descendants of:

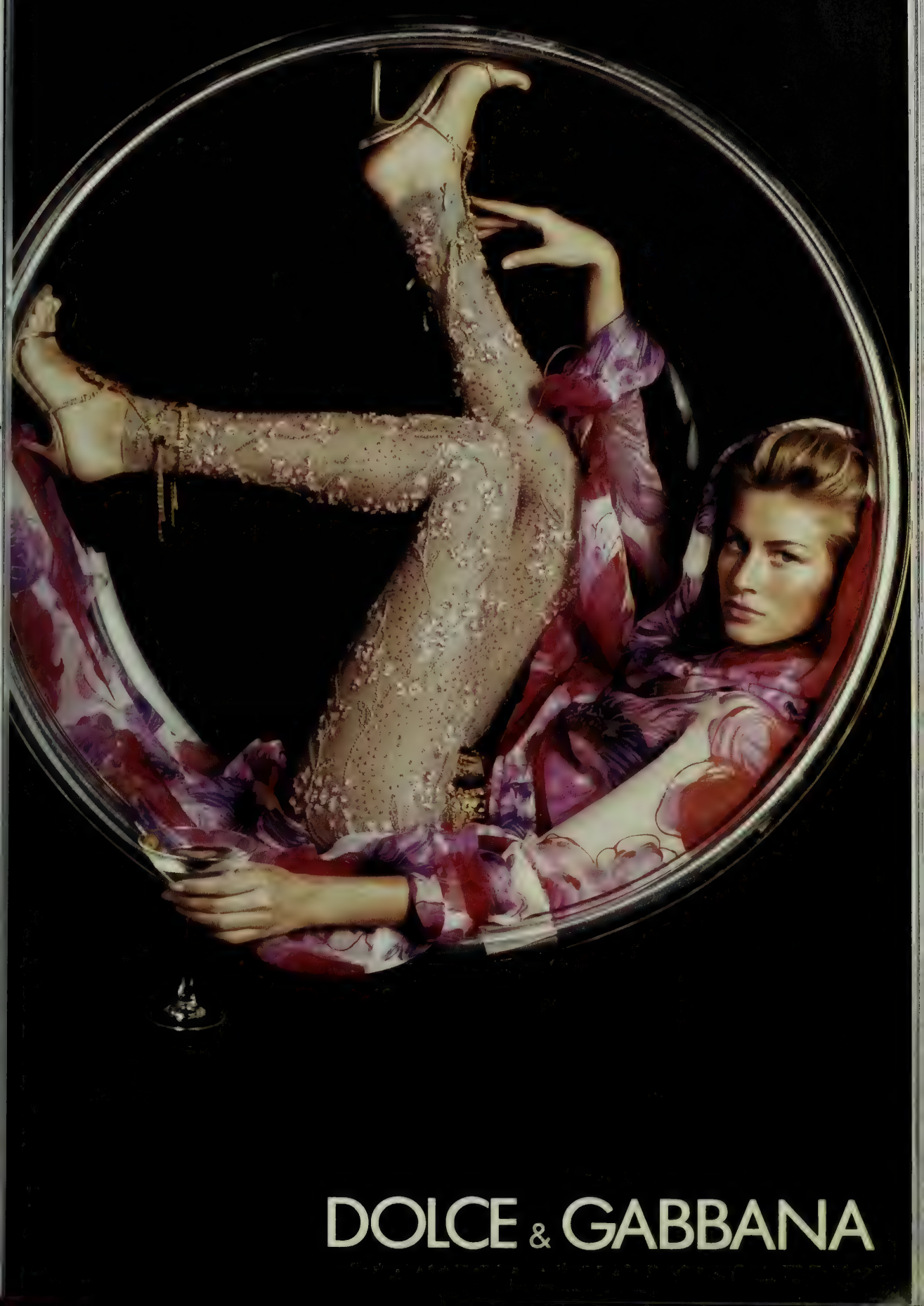
> The Princess Sophia, Electress and Duchess dowager of Hanover, daughter of the late Queen of Bohemia, daughter of King James the First, to inherit after the King and the Princess Anne, in default of issue of the said princess and his Majesty, respectively; and the heirs of her body, being Protestants . . .

The phrase "heirs of her body" means the principle of primogeniture, under which not only do sons take precedence over daughters, but the sons and daughters of sons take precedence over the progeny of daughters, and over daughters themselves (which is why the 18-year-old Prince William is second in line to the throne and his aunt Princess Anne, sister of Charles, is eighth). The remainder of the founding law of the British state is given over to an elaborate insistence upon religious correctness, and the upshot is as follows: To be head of the said state, you must be not just a Protestant but a member of the Church of England. You must be descended in the male line. And you must be, as far as possible, ethnically German. Amazing how long we ignored all of this.

Last October, Parliament passed the Human Rights Act. This law, which derives from the European Convention on Human Rights, and which is enforceable by a Council of Europe court, expressly forbids racial and sexual and religious discrimination. Can you see where I am going with this? Though silent on the selection of the head of state, the newly adopted British law eloquently negates all the principles by which that head of state is currently "chosen."

Just as the Florida Supreme Court was investigating arcane electoral statutes last December 6, and solemnly forwarding them to Washington for judicial review, the Queen was being drawn by horsepower in a golden coach to the one of her many palaces that contains her Parliament. There, in a time-bound ceremony wherein—among other things—a member of the House of Commons is kept as a hostage until the monarch has safely returned to her own private Buckingham Palace, she opened the proceedings with a "Speech from the Throne." This was the day chosen by Alan Rusbridger, the editor of *The Guardian,* to publish a special edition of the country's most venerable liberal newspaper. This edition performed two services simultaneously. It invited the High Court, Parliament, and the people to repeal the Act of Settlement and the Treason Felony Act of 1848, and to conduct a referendum on the monarchy. And it pointed out that, by issuing this very invitation, the paper had deliberately broken the Treason Felony Act, which punishes by imprisonment and deportation the advocacy of a republic. (Interest declared: I was a party to the conspiracy and wrote one of the offending essays.) Rusbridger, an ultra-smart Cambridge-educated 47-year-old who has edited the paper for six years now, told me that it was Tony Blair who had accidentally precipated the crisis: "New Labour came in and tinkered with the constitution, making things worse in some ways and giving even more power to the executive over Parliament. It wasn't possible to discuss this without raising the issue of the monarchy and it isn't legal to debate the monarchy in Parliament, so it became a newspaper's job." I think Rusbridger would look very fetching breaking rocks.

Oh, don't be ridiculous, you hear people saying. Of course they won't charge the editor of *The Guardian* under the Treason Felony Act. But in that case, ought the law not be repealed? And is it not, also, in conflict with the Hu-


DOLCE & GABBANA

man Rights Act? Rusbridger wrote to the attorney general, Lord Williams of Mostyn, warning him of the paper's intentions and reminding him that the law, which used to be employed to send Irish editors to Botany Bay in chains, was still in full force and effect. He asked to be informed whether he and his paper would be liable for prosecution, for seeking "to deprive and depose Elizabeth Windsor (and her successors) from the style, honour and royal name of the imperial crown of the United Kingdom." Lord Williams wrote back saying intriguingly that he could not confirm that he would invoke the law. In that case, responded Rusbridger, *The Guardian* would bring proceedings under the Human Rights Act and ask the High Court to determine which legislation was the ultimate or relevant one.

This may seem like an episode from *Rumpole of the Bailey,* but in fact the British statute book is clotted with medieval legislation that safeguards the reserve powers and privileges of the Crown. The Treason Act of 1351 stated that anyone party to adultery with the wife of the monarch's son and heir, including that wife herself, shall be put to death. This law—the last vestige of capital punishment in England—was actually amended only two years ago, after Parliament realized that it could have been duty-bound to execute Princess Diana, Captain James Hewitt, and perhaps quite a lot more of Her Majesty's subjects. And the law forbidding Prince Charles to become a Methodist or to marry a Catholic and retain his title is still enforced. (Prince Michael of Kent and the Earl of St. Andrews were excluded from the line of succession because they had married Papists, and the fact is solemnly reported in a footnote if you ask the Lord Chamberlain's office for a list of those who are in line for the throne.)

The British Parliament is still forbidden to debate the idea of a republic, but a motion to repeal the Act of Settlement is being readied for it. In December of 1999, the newly formed Scottish Parliament called unanimously for the act's repeal. At the State Opening of Parliament, when flunkies arrived to announce the royal presence, one Labour M.P. shouted, "Tell her to read *The Guardian.*" Piers Brendon, co-author of a history of the Windsor dynasty, estimates that a majority of Tony Blair's Cabinet are republicans, as are the two chief members of his kitchen cabinet—his wife, Cherie (who is also a Catholic), and his spinmeister, Alastair Campbell. The editor of *The Economist*—which came out for a republic six years ago—has called for a referendum on the monarchy when the present Queen drops off the twig. "Debate is moving," wrote Jasper Garard in *The Times* on the day I arrived, "from whether monarchy is a good thing to what should replace it."

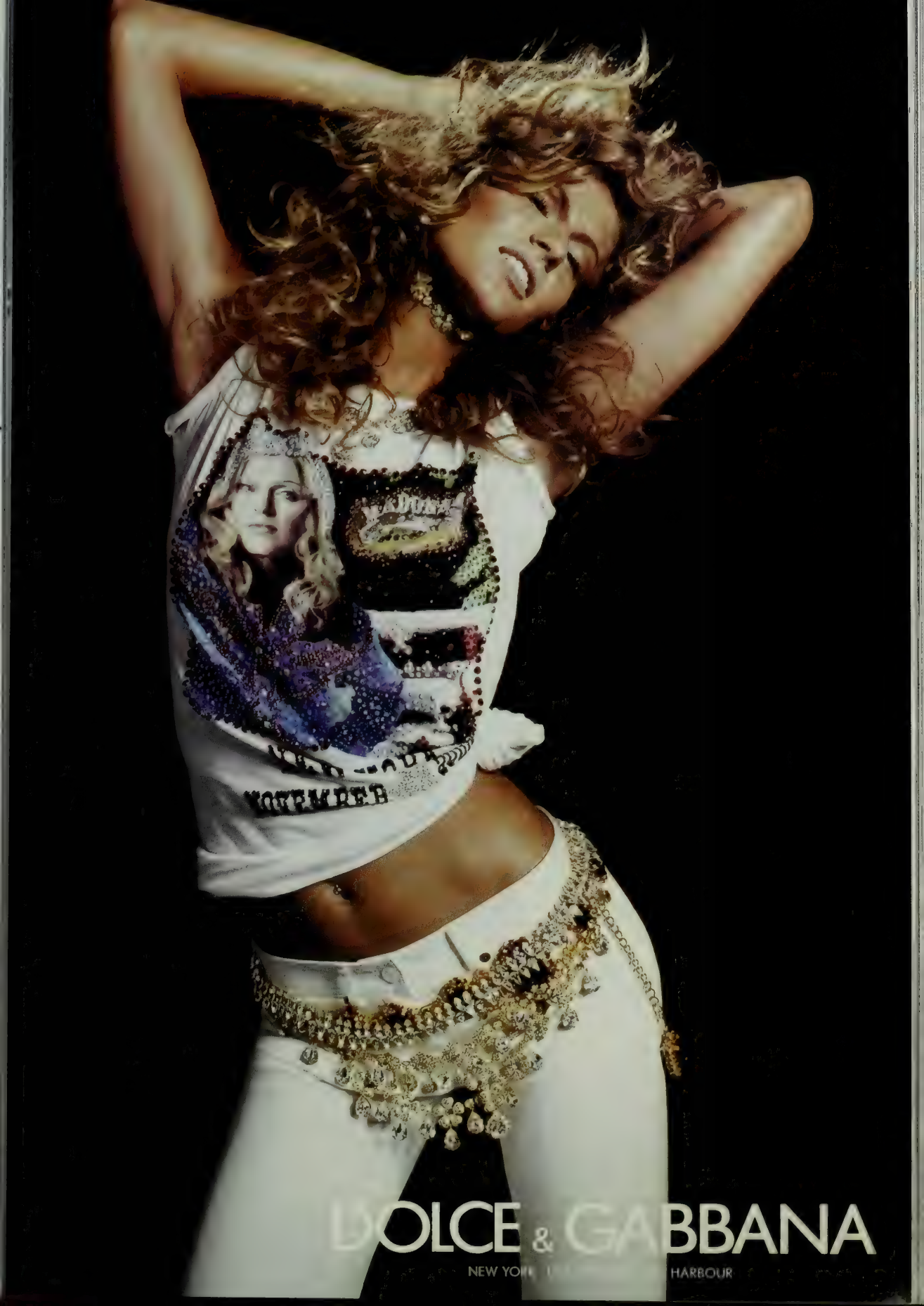


BONNY PRINCE WILLI
In 1988, Queen Elizabeth attends services in Sandr[illegible]ham with a then five-year-old Prince William, who is now second in line to the throne.

Why should the head of state be the only remaining office that is filled by hereditary principle?

The Windsors themselves look rattled, unable to decide whether the impassive face or the popular "one of us" gesture is the right choice. Prince William has had himself photographed as he charmingly and democratically scrubs a lavatory in Chile, of all places; the shot redefines the concept of his relationship to the "throne." The Queen, on the other hand, was caught on-camera as she unsmilingly wrung the neck of a wounded pheasant during one of her many shooting parties. The palace publicity machine seems to be off message in a most deplorable way. As I checked into my West End hotel, it was holding a ceremony in its "Hellenic Room" for the man (deposed by referendum in 1974) who still styles himself King Constantine of Greece. His cousin Prince Philip had been in the same hotel a little earlier. There was little excitement among the onlookers, and it was difficult to tell which crowned head was the Pretender.

I had a thoroughly enjoyable lunch, replete with republican toasts, in the company of Sir John Mortimer (the recently knighted creator of *Rumpole*) and his young colleague Geoffrey Robertson, the Australian-born Queen's Counsel who is *The Guardian*'s lawyer in this matter. (Robertson's offices, or chambers, are on Doughty Street, across from Dickens's old home.) Between them, these two men have advocated almost every significant case involving human rights, free expression, and British law in the past quarter-century, and in Mortimer's case for rather longer. Robertson was the lawyer who sheltered Princess Diana's lover James Hewitt in his attic when the gallant captain was seeking to escape not so much the scaffold as the tabloids. But this one is the big one. And its significance is much wider than the merely symbolic. Mortimer and Robertson have very often found themselves in sweltering, Graham Greene–ish courtrooms in the many countries that still use the British legal system or recognize the British Crown. For example, in Malaysia last year a Cana-


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dian reporter named Murray Hiebert was jailed for "scandalizing the court"—in other words, for reporting on the dismal state of the Malaysian judiciary. In this instance, and in other nations such as Zimbabwe and Singapore, ancient English colonial laws such as sedition, criminal libel, and blasphemous libel are still enforceable by authoritarian regimes. "Those who say that our old laws are irrelevant and unused are wrong," says Robertson, who acted for Hiebert's employer, Dow Jones, in the Malaysia case and who also defended *The Asian Wall Street Journal* when it was persecuted there. "They are used as instruments of oppression in other territories."

There's another sense in which the challenge to these encrusted statutes and parchments is metaphorically perfect. It makes an ideal curtain-raiser to the impending British elections. The Conservative Party, driven half nuts by Tony Blair's deft appropriation of the free-market turf, has reverted to bannering the issues of "sovereignty" and tradition, which appeal to the half-buried emotions and loyalties of the islanders, still awake under the junk pile of "Cool Britannia." The three essentials of the loyalist campaign are the union that binds England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, the monarchy which symbolizes that union, and the independence of the United Kingdom from meddlesome European Union laws and lawyers. (If you want to read the one book which summarizes the Tory psyche on these questions, and which has been plundered for rhetorical effect by the Conservative leader William Hague, you should get hold of *The Abolition of Britain,* by Peter Hitchens, and immerse yourself in its earnest and impassioned prose. He's my younger brother; well, there's one in every family.)

Tony Blair could well do without this; he loves being photographed with the royal family and has never gotten over his moment as impresario for "the People's Princess." (He even let it be "leaked" that his son Leo, born in the year 2000, had been conceived during a weekend stay at a royal palace. This news was surplus to my requirements.) However, he has more or less insisted on having a constitutional crisis by his decision to remove the hereditary peers from the House of Lords. If the hereditary principle should not confer political power, then why should the head of state be the only remaining office that is filled in this way? Concealed or ignored for so long, the essential absurdity of monarchy is now painfully exposed. In one of his famous "clerihews," the doggerel poet Edmund Clerihew Bentley wrote in 1929:

> George the Third
> Ought never to have occurred.
> One can only wonder
> At so grotesque a blunder.



THRONE OCCUPANT Queen Elizabeth addresses the House of Lords during the State Opening of Parliament on December 6, 2000, the day *The Guardian* challenged the monarchy.

At the State Opening of Parliament, one Labour M.P. shouted, "Tell [the Queen] to read *The Guardian*."

The prospect of Charles the Third (and Queen Camilla!) is enough to congeal the tissues in advance: Charles the Third ought never to occur.

I could be wrong, but I think that the royals are now rapidly withering on the vine. Not only has the aristocracy been shorn of parliamentary power, but Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland have won their own regional parliaments, and European laws have determined that any legal resident of the British Isles, whether Catholic, Jewish, or Muslim, has the rights of a European Union citizen rather than the duties of a British Crown "subject." It has taken a long time, but the actual state of affairs is now closer to the one demanded by the great Thomas Paine, who said, "The idea of hereditary legislators is as inconsistent as that of hereditary judges, as hereditary juries; and as absurd as an hereditary mathematician, or an hereditary wise man; as absurd as an hereditary Poet Laureate." Paine, who helped inspire the Declaration of Independence, had to flee the shores of England to escape the monarch's vengeance. "The Rights of Man," mind you, can be upheld in the most unexpected ways. The last two cases fought by Geoffrey Robertson under the Human Rights Act both involved celebrities. He requested, for George Harrison, the right to be informed when the psychopath who had tried to kill him applied for release. And he won, for Mike Tyson, the right to box in Britain. Tyson faced banishment for taunting Lennox Lewis with "I want your heart. I want to eat your children." But, as Geoffrey soothingly pointed out to the court, Lennox Lewis has no children. So there was no immediate threat to family values. Queen Elizabeth, on the other hand, does have children, and grandchildren too. Can she ensure that the male-descended German Protestants among them are the sole heirs to the golden and magical bits—the Mint—while everyone else picks up the Debt? I don't think so. □



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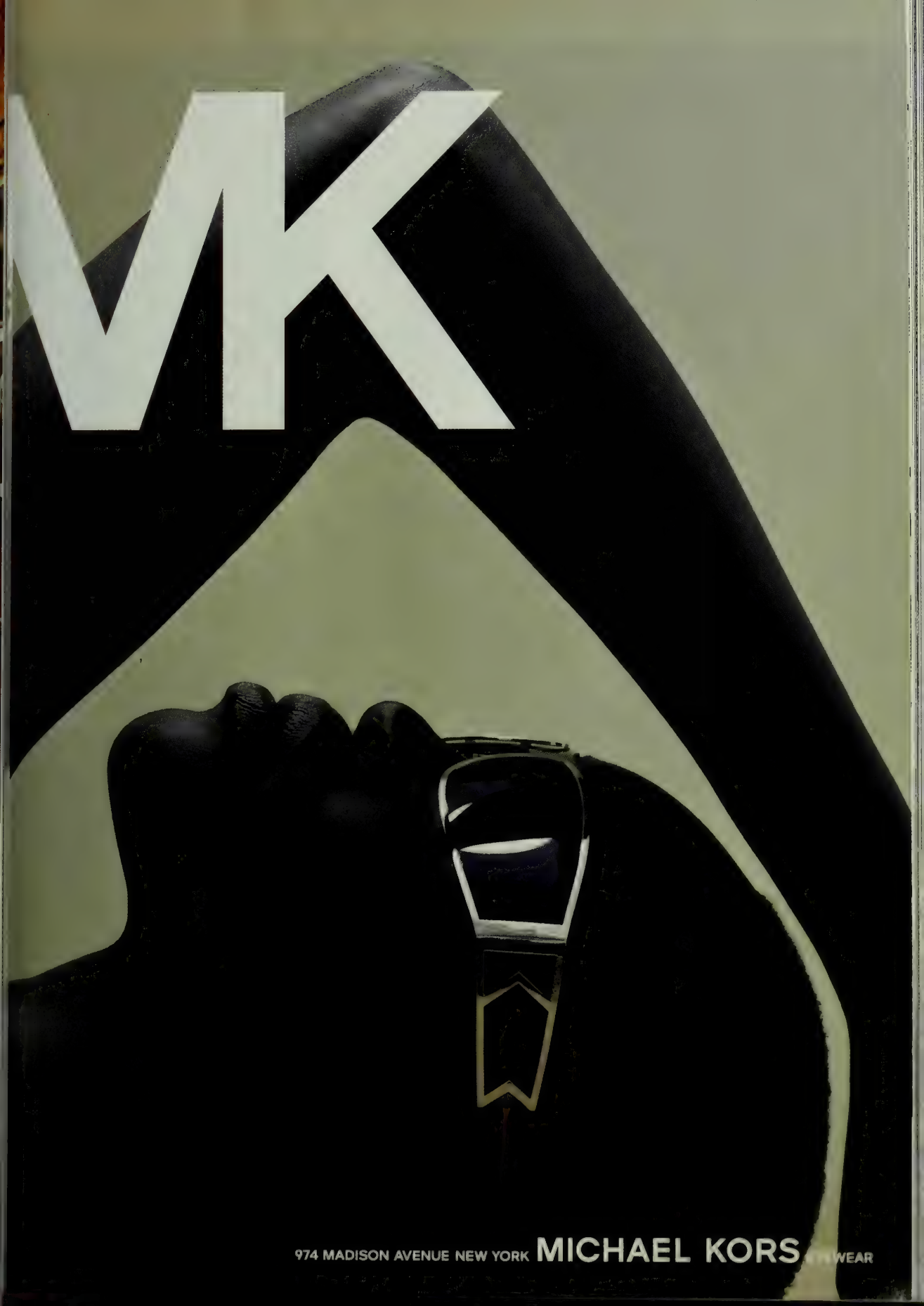
PRIVATE SLEUTH Dominick Dunne, photographed in the office of his Manhattan penthouse, January 10, 2001.

Another Party, Another Clue

The author's social life is never dull: whether he's being snubbed by angry Kennedys and friends of the du Ponts or given a whispered tip on the Edmond Safra mystery by the butler who takes his coat, it's all grist for his investigative mill. Here's the latest on his famous murder cases

I went to way too many parties in New York over the holidays, and was getting sick to death of them when along came a post-Christmas blizzard, which marooned me in my small Midtown penthouse. There were eight inches of snow on the terraces, and the trees were weighed down with it. The city had never looked more beautiful to me. I kept a blazing fire going, had dinners sent in from Chin Chin down the street, and enjoyed videos and DVDs of all the latest

PHOTOGRAPH BY JONAS KARLSSON


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movies, which the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences sends out to its members every January, and which I ran back-to-back. *Traffic, Chocolat, The House of Mirth.* It was sheer bliss. But everything ends, and soon I was on the circuit again.

While I do go out entirely too much, something always seems to happen which makes going out irresistible to me. Invariably, an unexpected person will tell me something extraordinary. For example, a butler helping me on with my coat at the end of one holiday party whispered in my ear, "I'd like to talk to you about your Safra article." He gave me his number, and I called him. We met. He talked. I listened. "My trainer used to be Safra's trainer," someone else called to tell me. "My maid left me to work for the Safras, but she left and came back to me," said another. The Safra story has grown more and more complex with all the new information that has come my way since "Death in Monaco" was published in the December issue.





AWAITING TRIAL
Above, Lily and Edmond Safra, whose male nurse is accused of causing his death. *Right,* Michael Skakel, under guard, is charged with murdering Martha Moxley 25 years ago.

Lily Safra spent several weeks in New York in December, although very few of her old friends saw her. As Christmas gifts, she sent her lady friends an art book along with a picture of the fountain she gave in her late husband's name last summer to Somerset House in London. A few of the women I talked to who had gotten the art book and picture also received a private present of a more elaborate nature. One of the ladies recalled "the year we all got Manolo Blahnik shoes." The rumor persists that Microsoft chairman Bill Gates has bought La Leopolda, the Safras' palatial estate in the South of France, for $90 million. According to Howard Rubenstein, Lily Safra's public-relations spokesman in New York, Mrs. Safra, who is spending a great deal of time in England, is in the early stages of setting up the Edmond J. Safra Foundation prizes, which will honor in a significant manner outstanding figures in literature, music, science, and health.

During dinner at Barbara Walters's apartment one night, the literary agent Morton Janklow criticized my Safra article, saying that there were too many unidentified sources in it. Well, that's the way it is when you write about the very rich and very powerful, particularly if the story you're reporting is still in play. Certainly none of those people in Monaco who told me there had been two bullets in Edmond Safra's body wanted me to quote them by name. They'd have been driven out of the principality if I'd identified them. Actually, that detail has never been verified. I don't understand why Safra's brothers don't have his body exhumed in order to discover the truth or at least put the rumors to rest.

Apparently the article became the talk of Brazilian society. There were a goodly number of visitors from Brazil in New York over the holidays, and several found their way to my door. The Safra brothers and Lily Watkins Cohen Monteverde Bendahan Safra are much discussed at Rio parties, as is the suicide of Lily's second husband, Alfredo "Freddy" Monteverde. Monteverde is remembered with great affection by a number of people. A Parisian friend of mine who was spending Christmas in New York said to me during lunch one Sunday, "Someone I know is here from Brazil who wants to talk to you about your Safra story." My friend didn't want to be named. Neither did the person from Brazil when we met.

"When Joseph Safra, Edmond's brother, got married, he asked Lily and Freddy to be witnesses," she said.

"How long were Lily and Freddy married?" I asked.

"They didn't know each other two years before he died," she replied. Actually, it was a little longer. She married him in 1965, and he died in 1969, leaving her a tremendous fortune.

"It's never been clear to me how Monteverde committed suicide," I said.

"If you can call shooting yourself in the heart twice suicide," the visitor replied. "Freddy died at three in the afternoon, but the police didn't come until 9:45 that night. The gun was in the wrong hand." Howard Rubenstein responds that while there were two bullet holes, Monteverde was known to be depressed, and the police declared his death a suicide. There is more to come on the Safra story.

As of this writing, Judge Maureen Dennis has not made her decision as to whether Michael Skakel should be tried as a juvenile or as an adult for the murder of 15-year-old Martha Moxley in Greenwich, Connecticut, 25 years ago. It has been more than six months since the hearings in Stamford, which took place in late June, just before I left for Paris and Monte Carlo to report on the death of Edmond Safra. No one is ever going to call this judge speedy. The impeachment trial of President Clinton took less time than it has taken Judge Dennis to make this simple ruling. I can't help wondering what's going on backstage . . . But I had better not get into that one. Robert Kennedy Jr. has already lashed out at me in this magazine for my article in last October's issue, titled "Trail of Guilt," and I have lashed back. Our unpleasant letters were remarked upon in the gossip columns and on the Internet. Just before Christmas, I sat across the aisle from Kennedy at the funeral of Randolph Hearst, the father of Patty Hearst and the last of the five sons of the legendary newspaper tycoon William Randolph Hearst, at St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Church in New York. We both took Communion. Our eyes never met. We didn't acknowledge each other.

The update on the case is that Michael Skakel's wife, Margot Sheridan Skakel, a golf pro and the mother of Skakel's two-year-old son, has left him and filed for divorce. It seems a curious moment for the wife of the defendant in a murder trial to bolt, and I imagine that Mickey Sherman, Michael's colorful defense attorney, was not thrilled with her timing. Now that I think of it, she was not present at any of the hearings in Stamford, although her brother sat with four of Michael's five brothers, as well as his sis-

No one is ever going to call Michael Skakel's judge speedy.



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ter and the aforementioned first cousin, Robert Kennedy Jr. I remember remarking to my friend Dan Abrams of NBC that I thought it was odd she wasn't there by her husband's side during his greatest ordeal. Her uncle, Thomas Sheridan, was the first lawyer hired by Rushton Skakel after the murder of Martha Moxley in November 1975, so she is part of the history of the case, which must have been table talk in her home throughout her growing up. It has been reported that she might write a book telling all she knows. That book, like her husband's proposed book, *Dead Man Talking: A Kennedy Cousin Comes Clean,* will never see the light of day, believe me.

I never heard of him, never talked to him.
—Dorthy Moxley, mother of Martha Moxley, about Tad Baldwin.

Now comes word that a man named Tad Baldwin from Greenwich, Connecticut, who recently served 11 months at the Federal Correctional Institution in Fort Dix, New Jersey, for the interstate transfer of money obtained by fraud, has written a screenplay about the murder of Martha Moxley, using real names. He claims that he was once a friend of Michael Skakel's, and that someone other than Michael or Tommy Skakel, the original suspect, killed Martha with the golf club. According to a recent item in Mitchell Fink's column in the New York *Daily News,* Baldwin's screenplay has attracted the attention of no less a star than Matt Damon. The report was more or less shot down the next day on the MarthaMoxley.com Web site. Mickey Sherman was quoted in the *Greenwich Times* as saying, "I don't believe Michael was ever friendly with this person, or, frankly, ever knew him, or knew of him." Baldwin did appear before the grand jury in 1998, but the contents of the grand jury's findings are not available to the public. "Believe me, I wish more than anyone it was true," says Sherman, "because it would have exonerated Michael Skakel. But it was so far-fetched."

"If you call shooting yourself in the heart twice suicide."

If you write for a magazine like this one, you tend to piss off a few people. In restaurants and at dinner parties, I am forever running into people who can't stand the sight of me. The other night I was at a small dinner at Swifty's for Robin Duke, President Clinton's ambassador to Norway, who was back in New York for a few days from Oslo. At the same dinner was the best friend of the du Pont heiress Lisa Dean Chandor MacGuigan Moseley, the wife of Christopher Moseley, about whom I wrote in the September 1999 issue, in an article entitled "In Cold, Blue Blood," which concerned the murder-for-hire killing in Las Vegas of the fiancée of Dean MacGuigan, Lisa Moseley's son from a previous marriage. Christopher Moseley pled guilty and was sentenced to 16 years in prison. He has since been transferred from the North Las Vegas Detention Center to the federal prison in Fort Dix, New Jersey, an hour and a half by car from Serendip, his wife's estate in Greenville, Delaware, where his wife can visit him more easily. Her best friend cut me dead at the dinner party. It was a real old-fashioned snub, so I didn't have the opportunity to ask her how Moseley's wife and stepson were doing in the aftermath of the murder trial.

I was going to give myself a party for my 75th birthday, but it turned out that I was in Los Angeles that day with Graydon Carter, promoting the book *Vanity Fair's Hollywood.* Los Angeles didn't seem the right venue for my birthday party, so I gave myself a week at the Ritz in Paris instead.

My Safra article had generated considerable interest in France, and consequently I found myself booked up for every lunch and dinner of my stay. On my second night there, I went to a Thanksgiving dinner dance given by Ahmet and Mica Ertegun, the Atlantic record tycoon and his decorator wife, and the Paris art dealer Waring Hopkins at a club called Homero. The Turkish Ahmet and the Romanian Mica put on an old-fashioned turkey dinner with all the trimmings for the eclectic mixture of jet-set socialites and such celebrities as Jamie Rubin, late of the State Department, and Christiane Amanpour, CNN's star reporter, who flew over from London, where they now live.

An unexpected visitor who drove up from Monte Carlo to meet with me said that he has visited Ted Maher, the male nurse who has been sitting in the Monaco prison for well over a year, held responsible for the death of Edmond Safra. Like me, this man thinks Ted Maher is getting a raw deal. Like me, he is distressed by the contention that Maher was forced to sign a confession in a language he couldn't speak, without an interpreter present. I am bewildered as to why the United States or Amnesty International has not provided more support for this American citizen. My visitor told me that Maher's lawyers want him to plead temporary insanity, but that Maher feels that that would be an admission of guilt. Maher's lawyer Donald Manasse denies this, insisting that they are just trying to obtain a proper psychological evaluation of Maher.

1/10/01

Thank you for your thoughts. Today was the hardest phone call yet. Ted was screaming and crying that he might just "stop eating"— "If I die or end up in the hospital it would be better than this place."

Monday the Judge forced Ted into interrogations (he declined— which you are allowed to). She kept him for 4½ hours showing all the letters kept from him. She said how I was turning this into a "diplomatic issue." She is no longer pursuing the police or firemen in this investigation.

Ted was brought to the Appeals court yesterday over the lack of evidence to show criminal intent, being imprisoned for over a year without evidence, no translator at "confession." The panel stated they felt they should not release him because he might be a threat to himself. He is due to go back tomorrow on issues of the Judge continuing to send documents in French (they ordered her to have English translation in August). I will keep you informed.
—E-mail to me from Heidi Maher, Ted Maher's wife.

Just before I flew over to Paris, I had lunch with a distinguished lawyer named Nathaniel Bickford, who told me about his experience with the late Barbara Hutton, the Woolworth heiress, whom the columnists always called the richest girl in the world. Bickford's story fascinated me. Barbara died broke in the Beverly Wilshire hotel in Beverly Hills in 1979. Her lodging there was paid for by Hernando Courtright, a gentleman and friend, who was the president of the hotel. There has always been a mystery about what happened to her vast fortune. Like many heiresses of her era, Barbara Hutton knew everything about spending money but nothing about conserving it. Among the several homes of noble proportions she amassed was the mansion in London that is now the residence of the American ambassador. She also had a palace in Tangier, a house in Mexico, and on and on. Her collection of jewelry was vast and renowned. Her many husbands cost her a great deal, too. In various expensive marriages, she became a countess, a baroness, a fake princess, and the wife of Porfirio Rubirosa, probably the greatest womanizer of his time. She always said that the only husband who never took any money from her



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was the film star Cary Grant. She had only one child, a son named Lance Reventlow, from her marriage to a Danish count.

I used to see her on occasion at Merle Oberon's house in Beverly Hills. She was still lovely-looking then, but people stared at her because she was fabulously rich, not because of her beauty. After she went broke, she went out of style, and people stopped talking about her. One day in 1979, I ran into Hernando Courtright in the lobby of the hotel, and he told me Barbara was dying upstairs. I went to the nearest telephone and called my friend Jack Martin, who wrote a gossip column for the *New York Post*. I told him that Barbara Hutton was dying broke in a suite in the Beverly Wilshire, and he got a front-page story out of it. Barbara died back in the news again.

She had spent and spent and spent, always thinking that her fortune was inexhaustible. Bored with the management of it, she gave authority to a very controversial figure named Graham Mattison. Mattison, whose wife, Perla, was a close friend of the Duchess of Windsor and a figure in Paris society herself, is generally thought to have siphoned off Hutton's fortune. At one point the heiress, having been warned that this was the case, decided to fire Mattison. She needed help for that. A young lawyer was flown from New York to find out how Mattison was handling her assets. That young lawyer was Nathaniel Bickford, with whom I was lunching now, 30 years later. He spent a year figuring it out, working with the firm of Coudert Brothers in Paris. He got to know Barbara. He described to me an exquisitely made wooden cabinet on wheels, resembling a dentist's cabinet, which maids pulled around for her. Its 30 or so little drawers, where she kept and loved to show off her jewels, were lined with velvet. Bickford remembers her telling him that she planned to leave a ruby necklace which had once belonged to Catherine the Great of Russia to the actress Jill St. John, her son's first wife, and another, which Bickford remembers as Marie Antoinette's black pearls, to Cheryl Holdridge, a former Mouseketeer, who was her son's second wife.





THE HEIRESSES *Above*, du Pont heiress Lisa Dean Moseley leaving her third husband's trial for murder. *Left*, the wedding of Barbara Hutton to Cary Grant, husband number three.

Having gathered enough evidence against Mattison, the French Sûreté was ready to arrest him if Hutton agreed. On that very night, Lance Reventlow was killed in a crash in a private plane near Aspen, Colorado, along with two others. Hutton was in Tangier at the time and it was Bickford's job to call and tell her that Lance was dead. Mattison flew to Barbara's side to comfort her. She couldn't fire him after that. That was the last Bickford saw of her. After her death, the necklaces were never found.

On my first day in Paris I had lunch at the Ritz with Jimmy Douglas, a rich American expatriate who has lived in Paris for 50 years and was once the lover of Barbara Hutton. Rod Coupe, with whom Douglas shares an apartment on the Rue du Bac, provided me with a letter that Barbara had written to Jimmy, beginning "Dearest, Darling Piglet," in which she asked him to return certain valuable paintings she had given him as gifts. "In short, sweetheart, I am in quite a mess financially . . . and I have enormous debts," she wrote. Douglas returned the pictures.

That night, at a dinner at Sotheby's, in the sort of coincidental meeting that is a signature of my life, I was seated next to a beautiful and beautifully jeweled woman I had never met, who fortunately spoke English. She didn't know who I was, and I didn't know who she was. Her place card said, "Madame Roche." People at the table called her Bou Bou. As an opener, I remarked on her jewels. "Carole Rochas," she replied, naming the socialite jewelry designer, who is enjoying a great success with the fashionable set. "What do you call that stone?" I asked, pointing to a ring with a large pale gem surrounded by diamonds. She couldn't think of the word in English. "Aquamarine," translated Caroline Whitman, a Parisian friend of mine seated to my right, whom I had known in Los Angeles years ago, when she was married to the movie actor Stuart Whitman. "Tell me about this lady on my left," I whispered to Caroline. She did a quick summary of her bio—whom she was married to, whom she used to be married to, who her mother was, something about a house in Tangier—and ended by saying, "Barbara Hutton was her godmother."

I turned to my left again and mentioned Barbara Hutton. She had adored Barbara, the woman said. Barbara had been her mother's best friend. She deplored the books about Barbara Hutton, which depicted her in such a bad light. She remembered her as having been generous to a fault, once helping out a teacher of hers who had cancer and no money.

"Did you know Graham Mattison?" I asked.

She made a face indicating that she hadn't cared for him.

"Tell me about him," I said.

"He was a gambler, a very bad businessman, and a thief," she replied. Then she turned to the man on her left, indicating that she was finished with the conversation. A curious twist to the story, I heard subsequently, was that Mattison died broke himself a few years later. He really was a very bad businessman and a gambler. He had had a stroke while reading an anonymous letter accusing him of stealing Hutton's money. His widow, Perla, now very old, lives in a room in the apartment of a bachelor friend in Buenos Aires. They say she never complains.

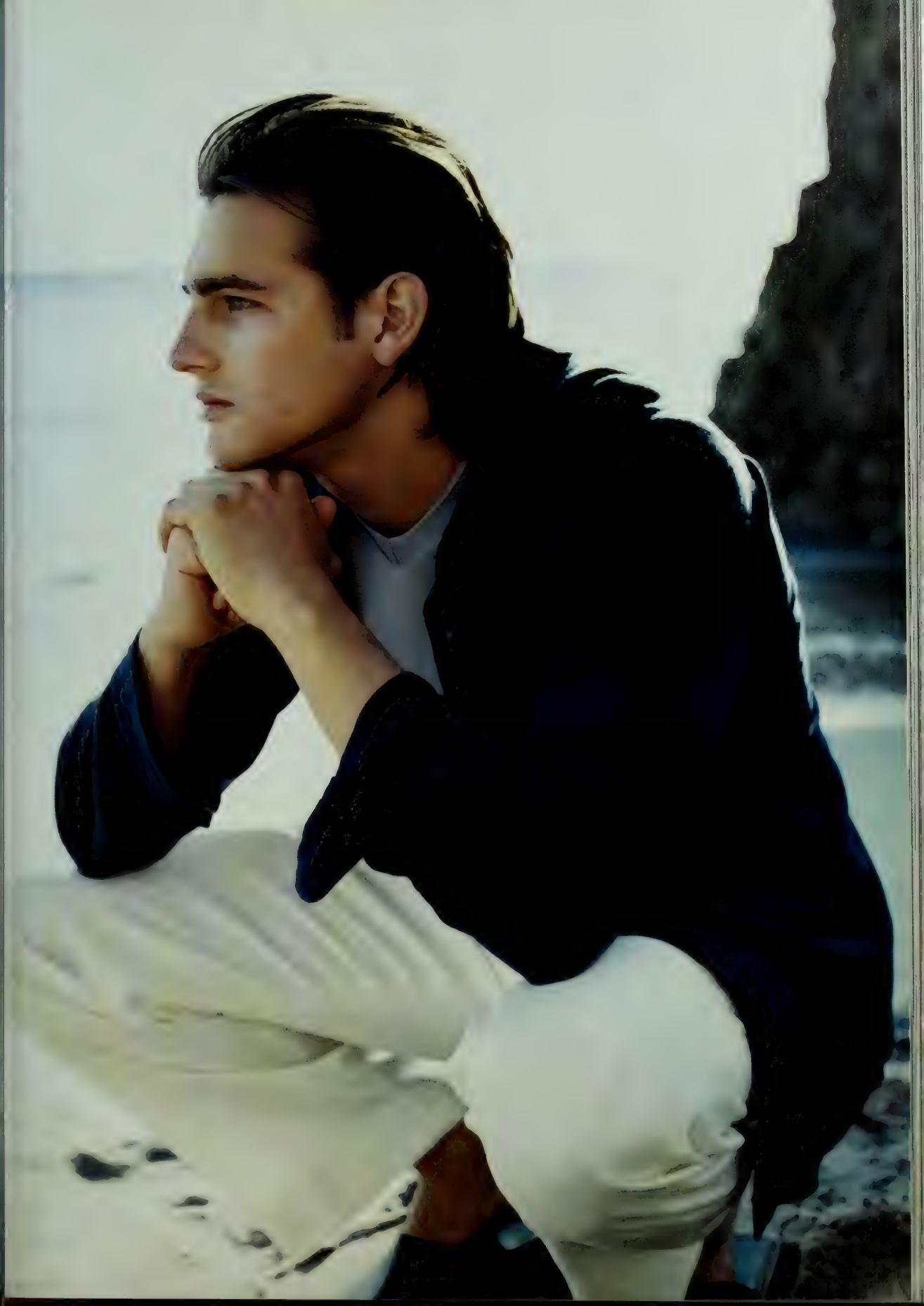
"Mattison was a gambler, a bad businessman, and a thief."

The day I wrote the above, I went to dinner at Le Cirque in New York with a group of friends. In walked Jill St. John and Robert Wagner, in town from Hollywood on their way to France. They are old friends of mine from years ago, when they were both married to other people. After hugs and kisses, I said, "Jill, I was just writing about you in my diary." I told her about meeting Nathaniel Bickford and hearing that Barbara Hutton

JOSEPH ABBOUD








JOSEPH ABBOUD
BLOOMINGDALE'S NEIMAN MARCUS SAKS FIFTH AVENUE

was going to leave her a ruby necklace that had belonged to Catherine the Great.

Jill said, "It was an emerald necklace, not a ruby. It didn't belong to Catherine the Great. It belonged to an archduchess, or someone."

"Did you ever get it?"

"No. No one knew what happened to the jewelry, and none of it ever turned up on the market."

Many of the criminal cases I have written about continue to surface in my life. Early in the new year, I was interviewed by E! Entertainment Television for an upcoming show on Lyle and Erik Menendez, the rich Beverly Hills brothers who blew away their parents with 16 shots in the family mansion in 1989. I thought I had put that one to rest after so many years, but I found myself getting just as agitated during the interview as I used to get during the trial, when the lies being told in the courtroom so enraged me that I came into public conflict with the famous California defense attorney Leslie Abramson. The brothers' first trial ended with two hung juries, but they got their just deserts in the second trial: found guilty, each of them received the sentence of life without the possibility of parole. Over the years I've actually thought a lot about Lyle and Erik Menendez, whiling away their lives in 8-by-10-foot cells in separate prisons, never being able to see each other again. Those boys could have had such bright futures. A family friend who visits them a couple of times a year told me that they never discuss the murders, but that they both feel remorse for the things they said about their father at the trial. I'd like to visit them in prison and see if they would now tell what really happened that terrible night. I never for a minute believed that Jose Menendez had forced his sons into unwanted sexual acts. Fortunately, neither did the jury in the second trial.

They say there were no witnesses to the act, as if children are seduced in public.

—Marion Lambert, on the telephone from Geneva.

For three years I have been looking into a tragic case in Geneva, Switzerland, involving the suicide of a staggeringly beautiful 20-year-old heiress named Philippine Lambert, the daughter of Baron Philippe Lambert, formerly of the Banque Bruxelles Lambert in Belgium, and his wife, Marion. The Lamberts are prominent in international society, or were before the catastrophic event that changed their lives. I happened to be in Paris at the time, writing about couture week for this magazine. At every party, people were talking about Philippine Lambert's suicide and the devastation of her parents. One night my friend Taki Theodoracopulos, who writes a weekly column for *The Spectator,* called me at the Ritz from his chalet in Gstaad. He introduced me over the telephone to his friend and neighbor the Baroness Lambert, the mother of the dead girl. The baroness said she wanted to meet with me. I said I could come to Geneva after the collections. She said no, she would prefer to meet me in New York, where she kept an apartment, the following week.

I found her to be handsome, chic, distraught, and difficult. I had told Taki, and Taki had told her, that I had gone to boarding school with her husband, Philippe, and his older brother, Léon, back in the 40s during the war, which I thought was a rather remarkable coincidence. "He doesn't remember you" was all she said. She's that kind of difficult. But her story was a serious one. Vincent Meyer, the grandson and heir of the famous financier André Meyer (for whom the Meyer wing at the Metropolitan Museum in New York is named) and a silent partner of Lazard Frères, as well as a close family friend of the Lamberts in Geneva, had been charged with manslaughter and rape following Philippine's suicide and placed in a jail in Geneva. Philippine had left a diary containing a detailed account of the relationship, which the Lamberts gave to the police. It was alleged that Meyer began sexually abusing Philippine when she was 12 and continued until she was 15. After three months in preventive detention, Meyer was released from jail on bail of six million Swiss francs (nearly $4 million)—the largest bail ever paid in Switzerland—to prepare for the trial. He has always denied the charges.

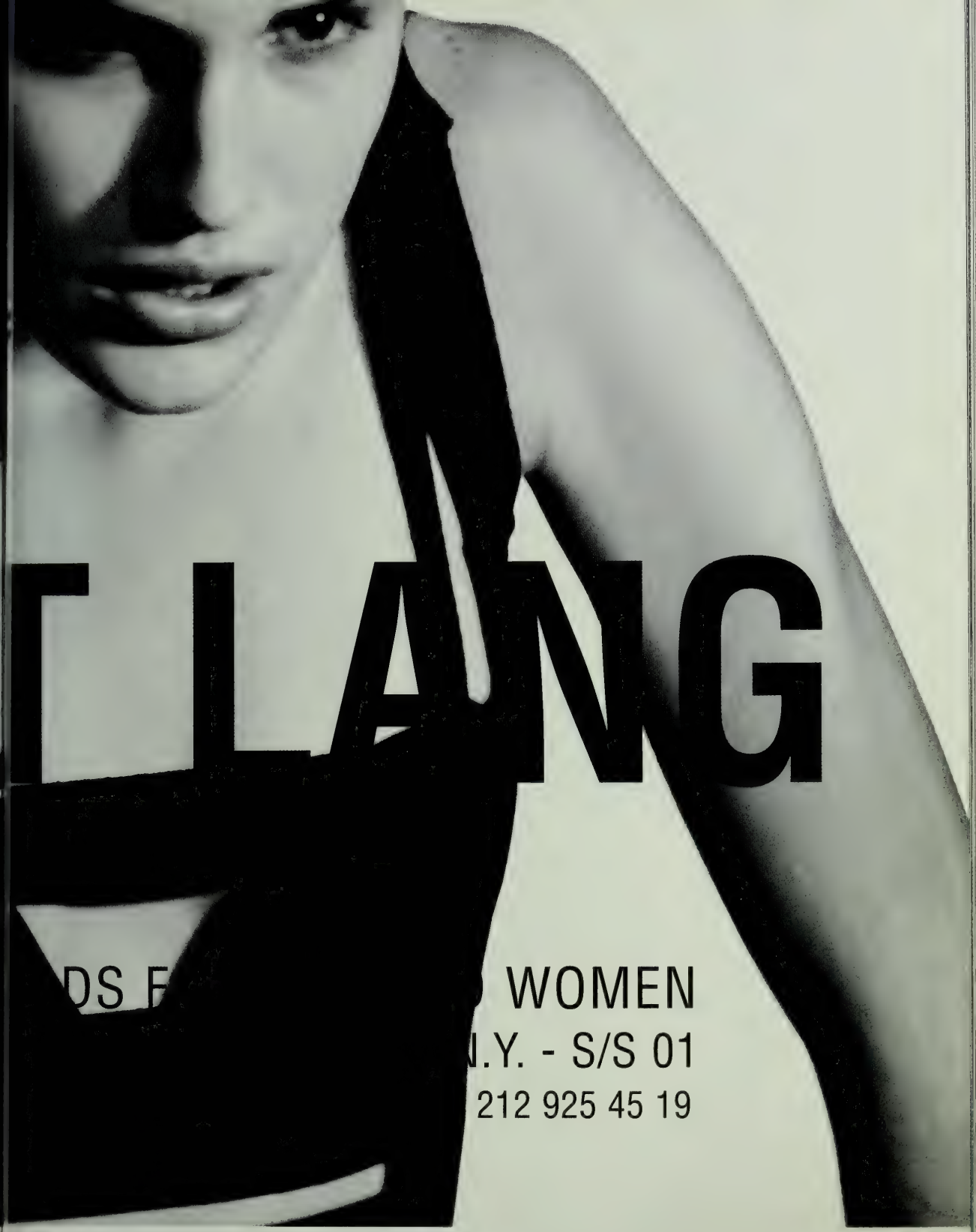
The case polarized European society. Vincent Meyer's second wife, the former Elizabeth Stuart, a young and beautiful English art dealer, was pregnant with their first child when Meyer was arrested. Madly popular, she instantly became a sympathetic figure in the case, and friends from everywhere rallied to the Meyer cause. On the other hand, Baroness Lambert, the grieving mother, became the heavy in the case for pursuing it so relentlessly. I've watched her be snubbed by people she knew when we were having lunch at the Carlyle Hotel. A few people I know in New York have pounced on me every time they caught sight of me in order to vilify Marion Lambert and tell stories indicating Philippine's mental instability. But I am deeply sympathetic to Baroness Lambert. She and I got off to a bad start, but I have grown to admire her, almost without reservation. She's difficult—make no mistake about that—but she is also brilliant, fearless, passionate, and so deeply convinced that Vincent Meyer is guilty of molesting her daughter that she simply doesn't give a shit whether people who used to be her friends have stopped speaking to her or not. This is a lady who wants justice for her child, and who better than I could understand what it feels like when your daughter dies in a terrible way? Early in January the court in Geneva decided not to go forward with the case, citing insufficient evidence. Down but never out, Baroness Lambert is considering writing a book about it.

They'd be driven out of the principality if I identified them.

I have not been a fan of New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani. Several years ago, when we were both speakers at a Victims Rights candlelight service, he was unnecessarily rude, and I never liked him after that. Recently, however, I've changed. Though he doesn't know it, he has become a sort of guiding light to me. About a month after he dropped out of the senatorial race with Hillary Clinton because he had been diagnosed with prostate cancer, I was diagnosed with the same disease. It's not uncommon these days, and there are all sorts of new treatments. My original doctor had a nurse call to tell me the bad news over the telephone, and it was a deeply troubling experience. I didn't need to hear that sort of news from her, so I dumped that doctor in short order. Now I'm in expert hands, and it happens that the treatment I am receiving is almost identical to the treatment that Giuliani gets. His doctor and mine are friends.

I'm finding the mayor inspirational these days, because he's so forthright when he talks publicly about his cancer. I've finished with the hormone stage, and now I'm having radiation every day for six weeks. I recently heard the mayor say on television, "Well, there are good days and bad days." That's right. The radiation makes you tired, so an afternoon nap has become a regular part of my daily schedule. The way I figure, if Rudy Giuliani can run the city of New York while undergoing radiation, I can certainly write a regular column for this magazine, finish my new novel, *A Solo Act,* and start a follow-up article on the mysterious death of Edmond Safra. □


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TALE OF THE APES

We'll always have Paris. I could've been a contender.

Take your stinking paws off of me you damn, dirty ape!

Yes, *Planet of the Apes* occupies a hallowed spot in Hollywood history—it's the *Grand Illusion* of the men-in-monkey-suits genre. But now the 1968 film in which Charlton Heston uttered the immortal line above is being "reimagined," to use the publicists' word of choice, by the director Tim Burton. This *Planet of the Apes* will tell an entirely new story but will still feature a human astronaut (Mark Wahlberg) landing on a planet ruled by various chimpanzees (Tim Roth, Helena Bonham Carter), gorillas (Michael Clarke Duncan), and orangutans (Paul Giamatti). The planet, however, will not turn out to be Earth, and the film will not end with a loincloth-clothed Wahlberg on his knees cursing in front of a half-buried Statue of Liberty, though executive producer Richard Zanuck promises "another wonderful surprise and entertaining ending." Better yet, Heston will be making a cameo appearance, this time as a damn, dirty ape himself.

According to Zanuck, who was the head of production of Twentieth Century Fox when the original film was made, "The initial picture, when you analyze it, actually had very little action. The astronauts were captured and ran around a bit," but that was it. Zanuck promises that the new film will feature "hordes of apes in battle," and adds, "We don't have any lofty philosophical questions to answer with this picture. It's today's filmmaking approach. The equipment is better, everything is better and bigger and costlier." The *Armageddon* of the monkey-suits genre?

—BRUCE HANDY



ZAIUS IT AIN'T SO
Director Tim Burton with his beloved Chihuahua, Poppy, flanked by a couple of gorillas. Photographed on set in Los Angeles, December 2000. The ape makeup is by three-time Academy Award winner Rick Baker.

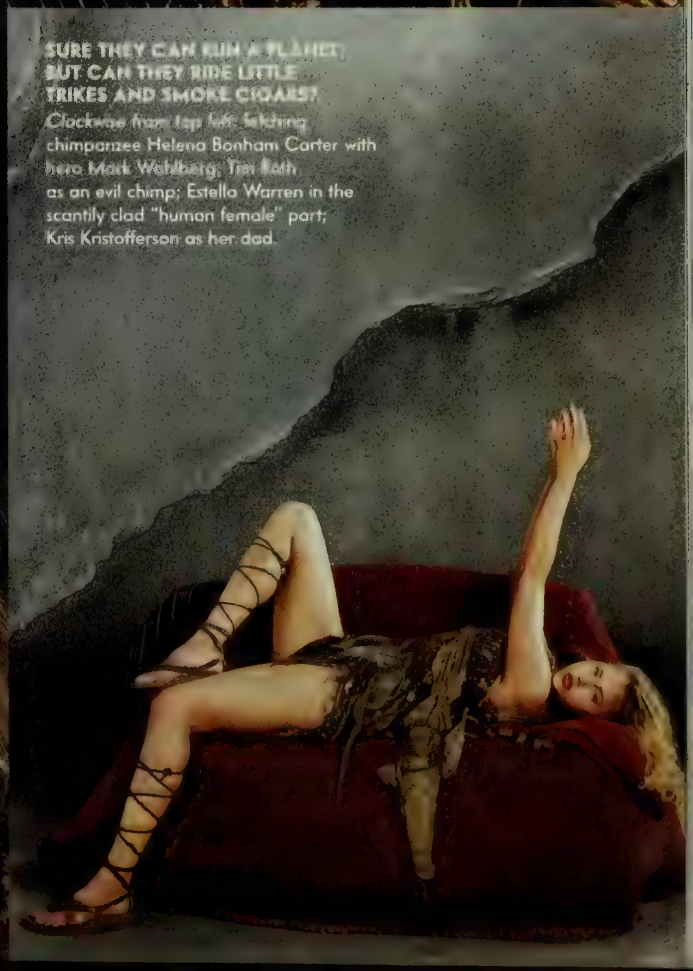
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARY ELLEN MARK







SURE THEY CAN RUIN A PLANET; BUT CAN THEY RIDE LITTLE TRIKES AND SMOKE CIGARS?
Clockwise from top left: Seething chimpanzee Helena Bonham Carter with hero Mark Wahlberg; Tim Roth as an evil chimp; Estella Warren in the scantily clad "human female" part; Kris Kristofferson as her dad.





GENERATION EX
Michael Dowling, formerly an agent at William Morris, has had to close down the Internet company he founded, a content site called iFuse. Photographed in the company's Los Angeles office, December 28, 2000.

IN THE DOT-COM DOLDRUMS

With the NASDAQ meltdown, the brash young C.E.O.'s who strutted the business-world stage like rock stars have turned into walking punch lines. And a generation wonders what happened to its American Dream of retiring young as options millionaires

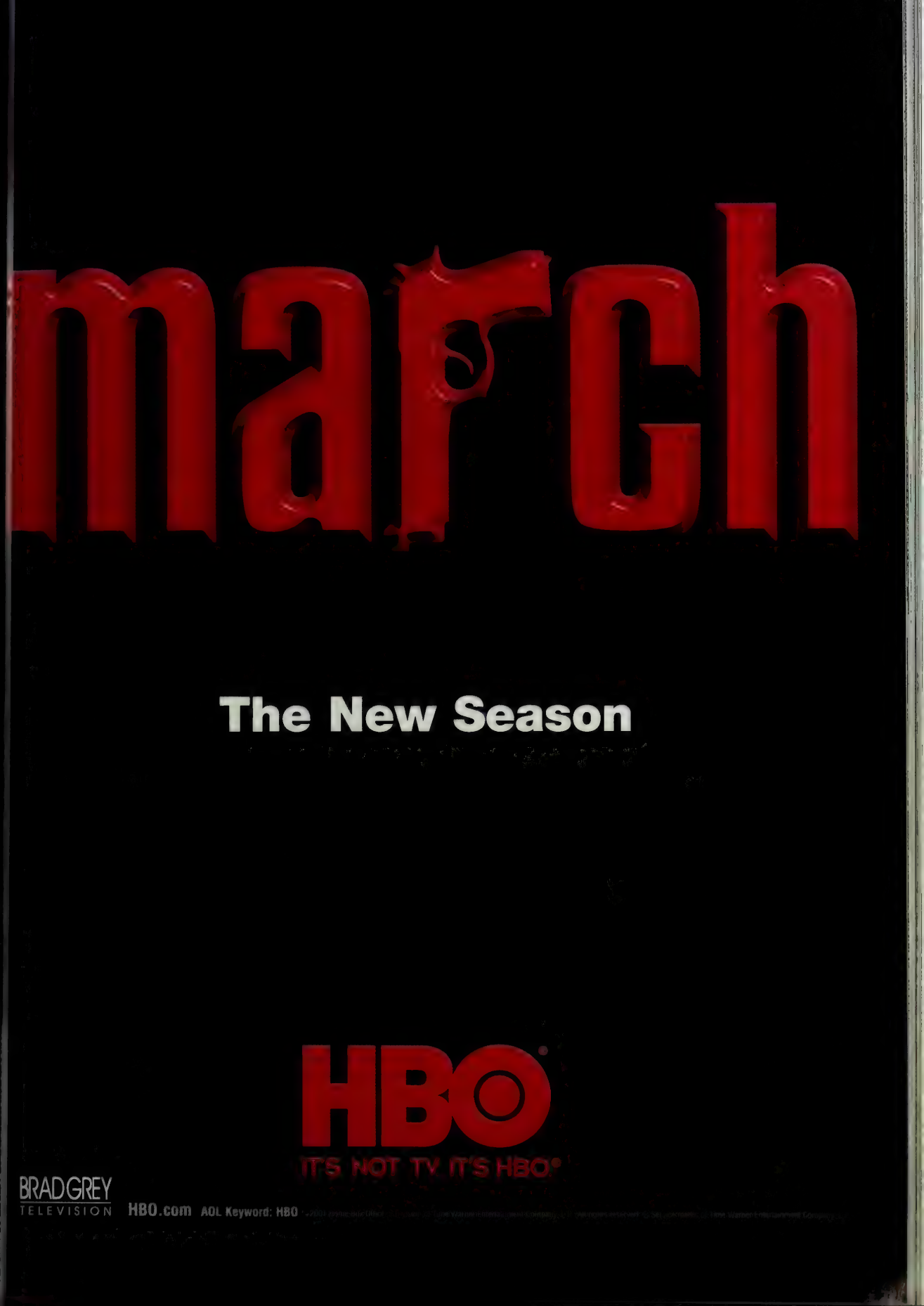
BY EVGENIA PERETZ

For anyone interested in Josh Harris's new sweater, you can log on to www.WeLiveInPublic.com and look at it. You can also look at him reading on the toilet, and look at his girlfriend, Tanya Corrin, eating peanuts. That's because there are 32 cameras recording everything that Corrin and Harris—founder of Silicon Alley's flashiest dot-com, the now defunct Pseudo—are doing, saying, wearing, watching, and consuming, in every corner of their 4,000-square-foot Lower Manhattan loft, 24-7. It's an art project, explains Harris, a feverish man-boy of 39. It's "the last leg of the celebrity paradigm," and it represents "the juncture of human existence."

Maybe so. But it's a far cry from what Harris had in mind on February 15, 2000, the night he appeared on *60 Minutes II*. Trumpeting his brainchild, Pseudo, which offered 200 channels of superedgy streaming video delivered free to your desktop, Harris warned correspondent Bob Simon, "I'm in a race to take CBS out of business." Now, with the programming options down to Josh emptying dishwasher, Josh taking nap, and Josh clipping toenails, Simon and his colleagues at CBS can sleep soundly.

Like thousands of others who once counted on making it big on the Internet, Harris is taking a crash course in how to live in an age of severely diminished expectations. At one point worth

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JASON SCHMIDT


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$80 million on paper, Harris now says, "I've thought about going broke.... It's a constant thing." He admits that soon he'll have to start charging his viewers. Presumably, he is talking about the roughly 100 people logged on tonight, many from Sweden.

Setting up WeLiveInPublic has cost Harris upwards of $1 million, and because he and his girlfriend literally live on-line, the Internet-access bills run about $200,000 a month. And for what? Corrin usually waits until yoga class to go to the bathroom, and she says she hasn't had sex with Harris since an aborted attempt last summer, when they gave WeLiveInPublic a test run.

Can anyone forget what life was like in 1999? Not only could a manifesto such as Harris's "We're in the business of programming people's lives" fly as a business plan, it could also get venture capitalists worked into a big lather and ready to part with $16 million. At the same time, kids such as Jeff Dachis and his Hebrew-school buddy Craig Kanarick, who created the Internet consulting-and-design firm Razorfish (whose mission is to "recontextualize" businesses), suddenly found themselves with hundreds of millions in stock and the opportunity for major-league makeovers. Kanarick cut the stringy long hair, threw out the Coke-bottle glasses, and started wearing lots of grape, while Dachis, a onetime gypsy dancer, bought two motorcycles and started saying things like, "There are sheep and there are shepherds, and I fancy myself to be the latter."

As it turned out, a lot of sheep thought they were shepherds. Harvard Business School students scoffed at the chump change to be made at Morgan Stanley and decided the real money was in, say, pencils.com. Some even dropped out of college to follow the parade. An entire generation got in on the act, hoping that they could parlay youths spent in front of the computer screen into a BMW, a big house—who knows, maybe even early retirement. Who could blame them? This was the biggest thing since television—no, since electricity. Suddenly, going dot-com became what writing a screenplay had been in the early 90s, and the Great American Novel before that.

But in the aftermath of the NASDAQ crash of technology stocks last April, with investors some $3 trillion poorer, "dot-com" is starting to take on the distinct ring of a punch line. In the past year, nearly one in five dot-coms has closed up shop, and more than 40,000 employees nationwide have been laid off. As a result, many seemingly visionary C.E.O.'s have found themselves shutting their overworked pie holes. Dachis, for once, declined to be interviewed—perhaps because the Razorfish stock has taken a dive, and the company is also joining the growing legions facing class-action lawsuits from shareholders. Out of the ashes, a depressing cottage industry has arisen, chronicling the dot-com flameout. The *New York Post* has a new section that tracks dot-com casualties, numerous new Web sites exist to keep us apprised daily of the unhappiness, and a monthly Pink Slip party has started in Manhattan, in which recently axed kids get to commiserate over Jamaican beer.

The requiems run the gamut from dreary to agonizing. Marisa Bowe, one of Silicon Alley's rock 'n' roll pioneers and founder of the artsy culture site Word.com, describes the atmosphere as one of "rudderless dread." Meg Weber, a woman in her mid-20s who was laid off from Pseudo and iCast, another streaming-media site, compares the downfall to "telling a little kid that Christmas is all a fraud." And here's 34-year-old Bill Lessard, whose busy track record—seven jobs in seven years—has inspired

THE HARDER THEY FALL
With his Pseudo.com network a bust, Josh Harris lives on-camera for his latest project, the struggling WeLiveInPublic.com. Photographed with his girlfriend, Tanya Corrin, in his downtown loft, New York City, January 4, 2001.



JILSANDER

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AFTER THE GOLD RUSH
Mame McCutchin, a former executive at Pseudo, no longer has to worry about the insanity of dot-com office life. Photographed in her New York office, December 18, 2000.

him to co-write the new book *NetSlaves* and to go into the following bit of free-form drama therapy: "You ever see *On the Waterfront*? That's how I feel.... 'You take away your Palm pilots and your venture capital, and you're nothing. You think you're God Almighty, but you know what you are? You're a dirty, stinking bum, and I'm glad what I done to you.'"

Is there anyone truly surprised by the mass disillusion? After all, this was an industry founded on the principle of: If you hype it, they will come. The valuations were absurd, the money was only "on paper," and, with the exception of a few, the dot-coms themselves were fueled by a lot of hot air. Confetti delivered in under an hour? Brilliant! One-click Kibbles 'n Bits? Go for it! Harris's Pseudo wasn't much more inspired. Its 200 programs included a wrestling show called *And Justice for Brawl, Star Freaky,* in which B-list celebrities were accosted at premieres by a bothersome young girl, and another program called *Bugg Out,* which, as one Pseudo employee described it, was, "for three hours, 'Yo! Yo! Yo!'" Not surprisingly, one show got only 29 viewers.

But if you were a potential investor, the fact that Pseudo was little more than cable access on a computer screen didn't really matter. You invested in the mad vision of the young impresario. As Pseudo's Jonas Goldstein puts it, "[Josh] is the product." From the time he started Pseudo in 1994 to its end last September, Harris became famous for many things: there was his alter ego, "Luvvy," a greasy clown he liked to dress up as; his obsession with his lizard, Maurice; the phase he went through in which he wore a tie around his head. And then there were his downtown bacchanalia, which featured, in addition to drugs, everything from monkeys to gladiator battles. All of which made employees and investors feel that Warhol's Factory had come again (this time with stock options). Harris's most recent party lasted four weeks, took up three floors of a space he'd rented, and cost $1.1 million. It involved people wearing industrial-orange suits, public showering, group feasting, and live sex acts in which, as Mame McCutchin, Pseudo's 31-year-old director of business development, remembers, "none of the guys could get it up."

It sure was fun. But former Pseudo employees, even ones such as McCutchin who still kind of love Harris, admit that the aura of genius unbridled started to seem ridiculous. "If I had a prospective client coming in ... I don't want to bring him up the stairs and to have him see the graffiti and garbage and people peeing in the elevator." Meg Weber, an idealistic and bubbly feminist dressed in black, had her faith shaken, too. "I think [Josh] was starting to lose his appeal when that coolness factor was acknowledged," says Weber, who interned at *Ms.* before joining Pseudo. "Once it was acknowledged, we were suddenly conscious. It was like being in the Garden of Eden and finally noticing that we were naked. Everybody looked down, and I was like, 'Ew.'" What happened next was a pattern repeated at dozens of other dot-coms. After burning through a reported $6 million a month, Harris stepped aside as C.E.O.; he was eventually replaced by David Bohrman from CNNfn, who couldn't save it, and Pseudo ended up in bankruptcy court.

But perhaps no one felt the train wreck of dot-com fabulousness more than Seddu Namakajo. An excitable 27-year-old college dropout from Harlem, Namakajo was a business-development executive at two of the splashiest dot-bombs ever, the black entertainment site Urban Box Office Network (UBO.net) and Boo.com, an electronic fashion catalogue whose go-go 80s trappings are now legend: the Swedish former model Kajsa Leander and the Dieteresque Ernst Malmsten, who were co-founders; job titles such as "cool hunters"; a full-time concierge/chef; frequent dinners at Nobu; routine trips on the Concorde; and more than $125 million in fi-



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nancing from investors such as J. P. Morgan and LVMH. Naturally, Boo was featured in some 20 magazine articles during its first seven months in business. As Namakajo well understood, "the money follows the press, follows the hype, follows the party." The trouble was, the Boo people, whom Namakajo refers to as "so Euro-elitist," started to believe their own hype, privately claiming, it is alleged, "We're going to be bigger than AOL." But not everything worked out quite as planned. "The Web site opened a couple of days after Christmas. There were 30 orders, because the Web site didn't work," Namakajo recalls. "[Boo] had anticipated for that month 30,000 orders."

While Namakajo had a gnawing fear that Boo was kind of a joke, he, like everyone else, couldn't resist going along for the ride. "I'm the biggest consumer of all that shit. More than anybody," says Namakajo, who enjoyed the company policy that allowed employees traveling abroad to fly a family member or partner over on Boo's dime. "I flew my best friend out to London. I flew my best friend out who's a janitor. An all-expense trip, all meals, to spend two weeks with me in London." Hoping that one day he could parlay the options he received into $1 million, he purchased a Samsung entertainment system that's not yet available in the United States, spent $15,000 on Christmas presents, and got some "really expensive Italian carpeting." He also bought a house for his mother, and he started putting his brother through Wesleyan University. Namakajo, it appeared, had arrived. "I was the kid in the neighborhood that *made* it," he says.

FUTURE SHOCK
After a wild ride as an executive at two of the most hyped dot-coms—Boo and Urban Box Office—Seddu Namakajo rests up at his New York apartment, December 21, 2000.

"The people left holding the bag are all the young employees."



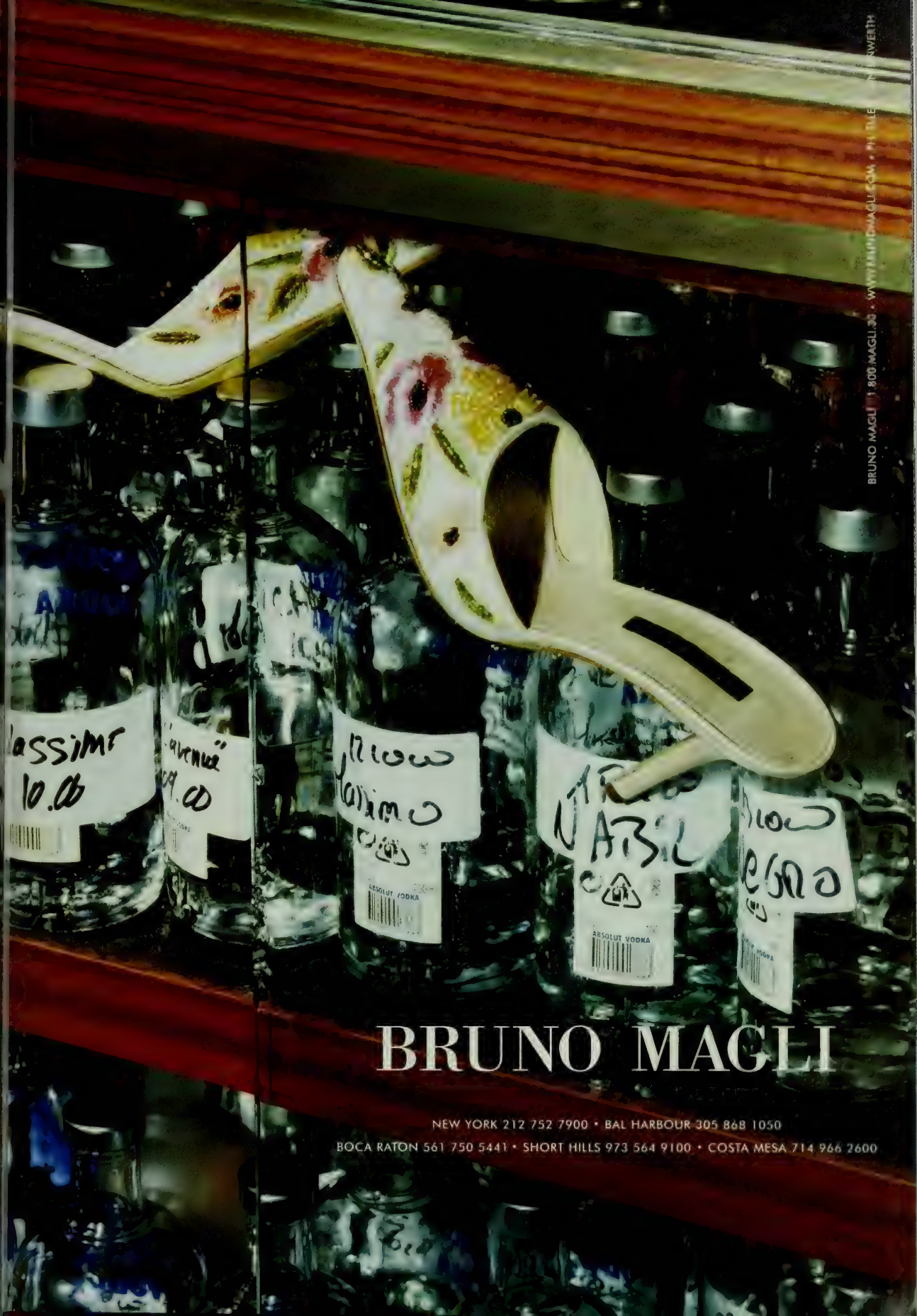
The dot-com boom was a chance for *everyone* to make it—and fast. Half the '98 graduating classes from the Harvard, Stanford, and Wharton business schools went into the Internet industry, while tens of thousands of young workers brazenly left their jobs fetching lattes and staring at spreadsheets in their dust. "They had a conquer-the-world mentality," says 25-year-old Andy Wang, founder of *Ironminds,* a general-interest Web magazine, which is now operating on no money. "Because they were smart enough to know that they didn't have to climb the ladder. Somebody had built them an elevator." Not only could a 25-year-old instantly become something cool, such as a "creative director," he got stock options. "People were taking three and four and five dot-com offers, to see which one had the most stock options, and which had the quickest return. *Everybody* did the math," says Andrew Goldberg, a 32-year-old Harvard Business School grad who started Eziaz, a provider of broadband access, which raised $50 million in venture capital. "There were people who joined us who used Eziaz stock for the money they were going to use to retire."

Some others, among them 23-year-old New Jersey native Bill Martin, also got into the idea of being a junior-varsity titan. Last February he sold Raging Bull, the financial Web site he'd started in his parents' basement, to Alta Vista for $167.5 million, mostly in stock, which he and his partners could cash in if and when Alta Vista went public. Since Alta Vista was already preparing to file for an I.P.O., it looked like a slam dunk. Martin was poised to become one of the richest dot-commers his age. He was featured on *Oprah* and was followed around for two entire days by *48 Hours,* which he admits "was pretty awesome." He also got itchy fingers. "For a little while, it was like Christmas morning was getting a lot closer and you're getting a little giddier—'I'm goin' out and buyin' a new car!'" says Martin, recalling the excitement that led him to a new BMW.

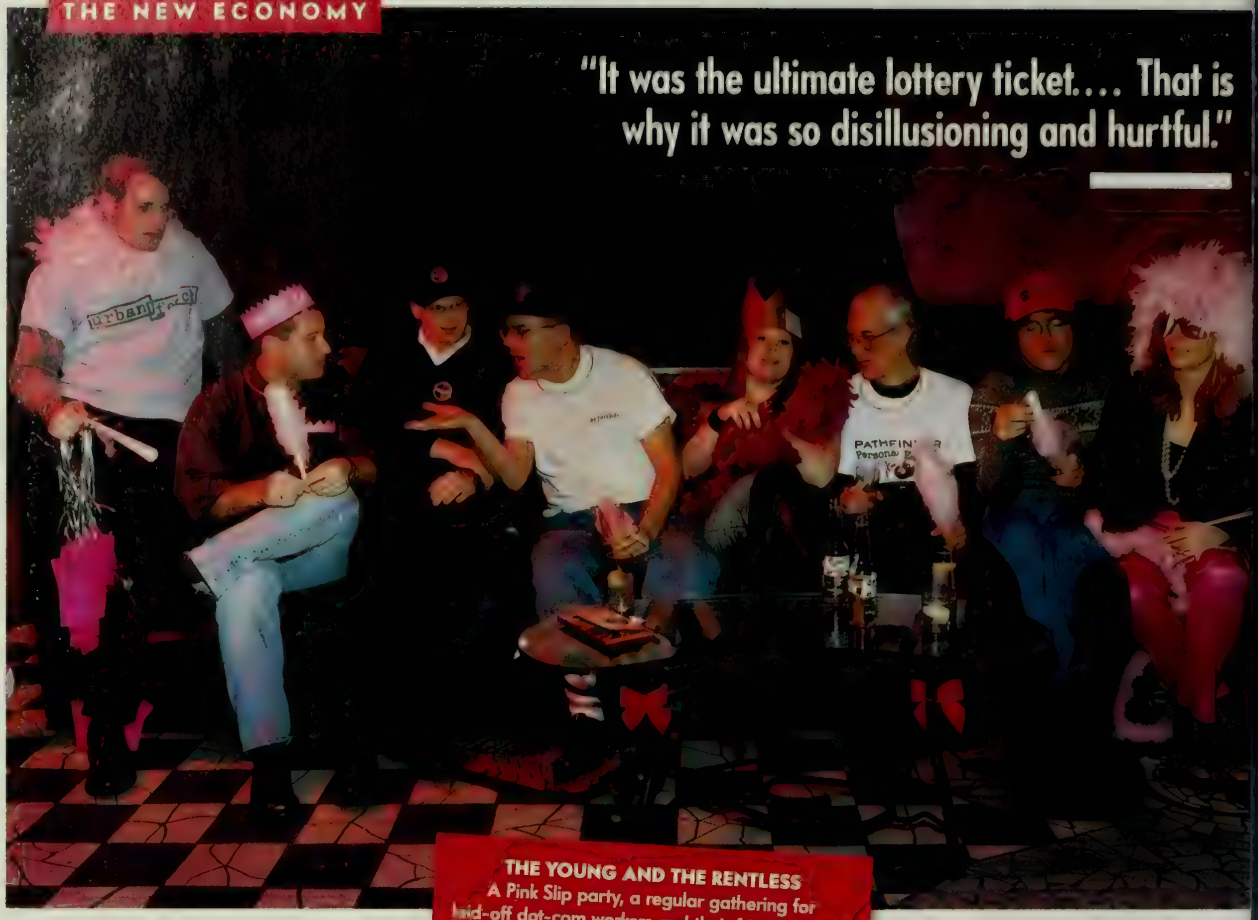
Now, alas, an I.P.O. for Alta Vista is unlikely, and while Martin still gets to talk to colleges about his entrepreneurial experiences, he also has to cope with, well, being a regular guy. "The difficult thing is people reading the paper: 'Oh, your company was bought for $168 million!'" Not surprisingly, Martin is now thinking of going to Harvard Business School. "There's a professor up there who invited me to go next fall," he says, rather unenthusiastically.

The promised land has vanished, and what's replacing it is not pretty. For most people the notion of trying another start-up is out of the question. "Oh, I'm going to become a product manager at some e-commerce Web site so I can sell shoes on-line?" says Lessard. "I could be the Al Bundy of cyberspace—oh, boy!" And going "B to B" ("Back to Business") feels kind of pathetic. "The prospect of starting over, of working for people who are probably younger than you, and having to go prove yourself working for 3 or 5 or 10 levels of management—I haven't seen a whole lot of friends do that yet," says another Internet casualty who is now at a crossroads.

The only viable option, it seems, is to drift. Indeed, the dot-com free fall has created a new lost generation of goal-oriented masters of detail who are now without a blueprint. Former William Morris agent Michael Dowling, 33,


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"It was the ultimate lottery ticket.... That is why it was so disillusioning and hurtful."



THE YOUNG AND THE RENTLESS A Pink Slip party, a regular gathering for laid-off dot-com workers and their friends, brings together (left to right) Richard Stephan, Joshua Siegel, Christopher Trela, Bill Lessard, Lindsey Clark, Steve Baldwin, Sal Cataldi, and Allison Hemming, at Rebar in New York City, December 20, 2000.

who started iFuse, a defunct Generation Y content venture, now spends much of his day hanging out at Starbucks. "I go there almost every day," he says. "I do my thinking, I do my reading, I do my writing." Kaleil Isaza Tuzman, 29, a Harvard grad who "always wanted to be better than the next one," started GovWorks Inc., banking on the idea that people would want to pay their parking tickets and utility bills on-line. But when the value of his company tanked in the fall, so did his self-esteem. "I couldn't go for a very long period of time without spontaneously bursting into tears," says Tuzman, who also had the surreal experience of laying off his own father. "It's totally decimated my ego." And Meg Weber, who was recently awarded the title of "Dot-Goner Princess" at the Pink Slip holiday party, has been spending a lot of time wondering just what happened. "It was the ultimate lottery ticket," says Weber. "Everybody wanted to believe. That is why it was so disillusioning and hurtful. Because it was more than just a job. It was people's American Dream."

In addition to the paralyzing disappointment, there are the more practical problems: capital-gains taxes to be paid, bank loans coming due, houses and jets to be returned. Michael Donahue, 36, seems to be facing it all. When he took his e-commerce company, InterWorld, public in August 1999, he saw his stake rise to $448 million. He then reportedly borrowed $14 million, rented a private jet, and bought a $9.6 million second home in Palm Beach. Now his personal stake has fallen to $12 million, and the house is back on the market. Others, such as Dave Kansas, editor of TheStreet.com, the financial Web site whose stock has plummeted from $70 to $2.50, simply can't maintain their purchases in the way they'd hoped. "I made spending decisions, a few that were based on a $10 stock," says Kansas, a low-key, self-effacing 31-year-old who left his job as a reporter for *The Wall Street Journal* to join TheStreet, "and when you're a $2 stock, you pay a price for that." He is referring to the loft he bought for more than $1 million in Tribeca when his net worth stood at $12 or $13 million. Now, with a personal wealth down to a few hundred thousand, Kansas describes the whole new apartment thing as "a challenge. I have no furniture. I've become a big fan of minimalism."

The shock waves have reached those at the very top, too, such as Michael Saylor, 35, of MicroStrategy, which makes "data mining" software for businesses. Last March, after MicroStrategy allegedly overstated its revenue, the stock fell from $333 per share to about $13. For the company's top executives, that meant—in addition to a civil fine of $350,000 and $10 million paid to settle federal regulators' allegations of civil accounting fraud—some heavy "soul-searching," says Saylor. He decided to focus on "what we can do better than anybody else," which Saylor calls "the business-intelligence business," and jettison everything else, including the company-wide cruise, which in 1999 cost $3 million. And for Saylor himself, whose personal wealth dropped by $6 billion in one day, that meant putting his dream house "on hold." Saylor had wanted it to look like the one in the movie version of *The Great Gatsby.* He had already purchased the 50-acre lot overlooking the Potomac River.

Saylor can handle the house part. What's harder is swallowing the humble pie. Featured relentlessly in the media when MicroStrategy was on top of the world, Saylor had all the accoutrements of a mogul: he talked about running for president, he is said to have dated Queen Noor, and he rented out FedEx Stadium in Washing-



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ton, D.C., for a Super Bowl party. He was also prone to bold, evangelical pronouncements, such as: "I'm on a mission from God, and if you don't buy from me, we're all going to hell. I mean that literally." Now, not to put too fine a point on it, those words are coming back to haunt him. "What's pretty clear right now is that during 1999, I, along with a lot of people in the tech business, sort of lost control of our media identities, or lost control of our identities," Saylor says. "The result is, when things are good, the market is just in love with 'What's the new sweater you bought?' and 'What kind of bicycle are you going to ride?' and that becomes a big thing, and, of course, then all those photos and all those images, they stick with you. And when the market turns down, those are fairly easy sources of ridicule." He can't help but think of James Carter, the young hurdler in the 2000 Olympics who, when he realized he was creaming his opponents, turned around and waved—"a sort of youthful, exuberant thing," remembers Saylor. "And I thought to myself—actually I cringed, because I realized: he had lost control of his media image at that point, because no matter what he does for the rest of his life, if he loses in the semifinals or the finals, they'll play that image.... In my particular case, a year before, I would not have recognized why that was a mistake."

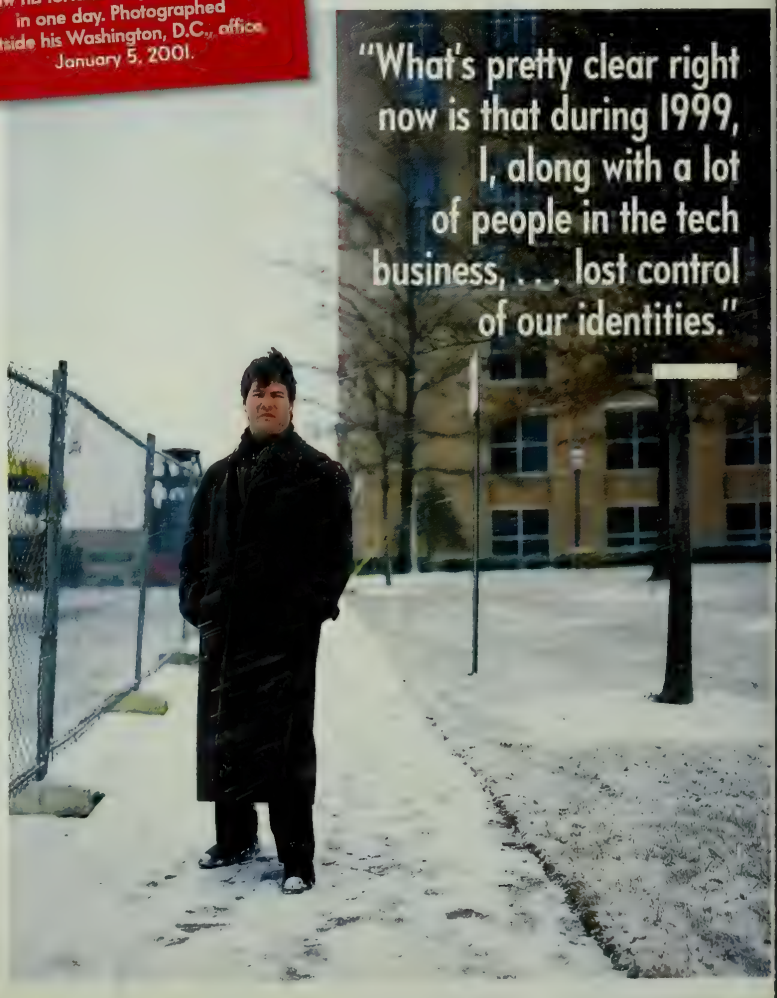
It's difficult to start getting misty-eyed for Saylor, who may only get to play around with a piddling nest egg of around $1 billion. After all, does anyone actually believe that MicroStrategy was worth what the market once said it was worth? Certainly, the ones who have the least sympathy to offer the Mike Saylors of this world are the young people whose options are worthless. Scratch the surface of their disillusion and you'll get to the rage. To observe the vitriol uncensored, one need look no further than fuckedcompany.com, an unsettling forum for anonymous disgruntled dot-commers, in which "These fucks accomplished their goal—an I.P.O. and dumping their fraudulent shares" is a typical example of sharing.

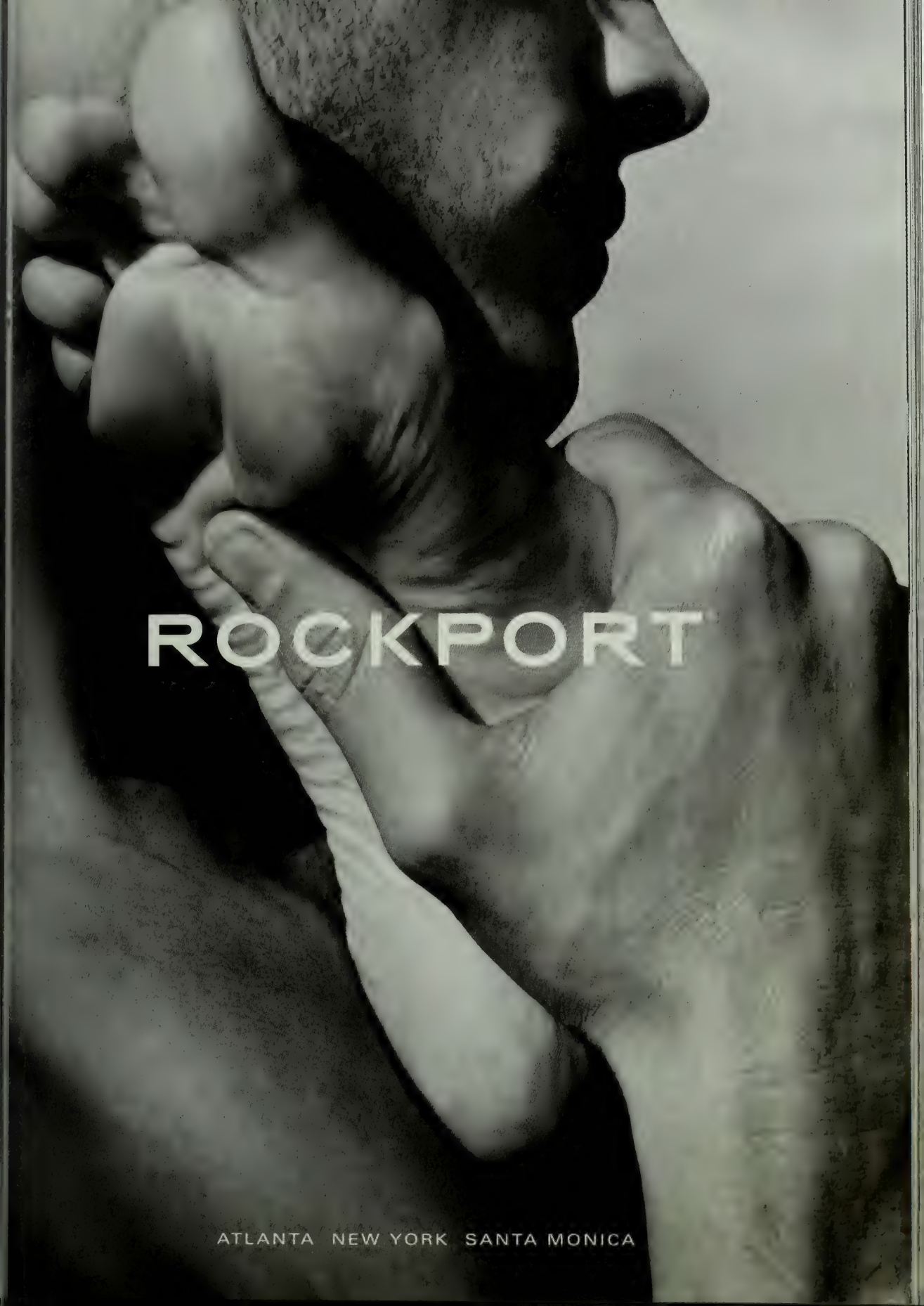
"The people left holding the bag are all the young employees," says Namakajo, who believes the worker bees were flat out sacrificed. In many cases, he claims, the top executives knew all along that their companies were failing and did whatever they needed to do to line their own pockets, while keeping the truth from their employees. First, there is the so-called "Friends and Family" catch. This allows a C.E.O. whose options are tied up for a certain period to have his inner circle cash in and out immediately, helping to steer what one calls "the great I.P.O. swindle." Second, Namakajo explains, are the bountiful stipulations written into the executive contracts, which he himself was responsible for putting together. "I'm the guy who writes the deals that protect the C.E.O.," says Namakajo. "When a company goes under, you can't sue him.... You can't take his assets; he gets to leave with his laptop, he gets to leave with his car that the company bought." Referring to a senior executive at the now bankrupt U.B.O., Namakajo says, "She basically left the company because it was shit on a stick, right? Awful place to work. I put in her contract that she gets paid for a year after she's gone. So it's, like, the company may be going out of business, it may be laying people off, but she got a check. There's people at U.B.O. now that are still getting paid. I'm not lying to you. They're *still getting paid.*"

Companies that once eagerly courted the press are now ducking reporters' phone calls. A spokesman for Priceline said no to an interview, explaining, "We don't have anything to say. We're just down here working hard, moving forward." This, despite the fact that Priceline's stock has fallen from $162 a share to around $3; that the company is facing 21 class-action lawsuits; and that even spokesman William Shatner has beamed out, owing to his drastically devalued options.

A few former prospectors even admit they're relieved. "It ended the whole nightmare, in this fake world, creating this fake media thing," says Andy Wang. "It's sort of like a grandmother on life support. You've already made peace with the fact that this isn't going to last." For Mike Saylor, it's almost a welcome slap in the face. "The market is sending us a message," he says. "It wants us to put our heads down and get back to work, and take a much more humble approach to our business, and take a much more humble approach to our personal lives." Strangely enough, that rationalization may have even permeated the parallel universe of wild man Josh Harris. When asked about the last days at Pseudo, Harris says, after some thought, "I've had to wonder to myself fairly recently whether I've been in denial." Living in front of 32 cameras might have little to offer the rest of us. For Harris, it may be bringing him closer to reality. □

BUBBLE TROUBLE
Michael Saylor, founder of the MicroStrategy data-software company, saw his fortune drop by $6 billion in one day. Photographed outside his Washington, D.C., office, January 5, 2001.




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KING OF THE PLUSHIES "Fox Wolfie Galen" with his beloved stuffed animals. Photographed at his home in Pennsylvania on January 12, 2001.

PLEASURES OF THE FUR

Welcome to the world of "furries": the thousands of Americans who've gotten in touch with their inner raccoon, or wolf, or fox. Judging from the Midwest FurFest, this is no hobby. It's sex; it's religion; it's a whole new way of life

BY GEORGE GURLEY

A moose is loitering outside a hotel in the Chicago suburb of Arlington Heights. The moose—actually a man in a full-body moose costume—is here for a convention . . . and so is the porcupine a few feet away, as well as the many foxes and wolves.

Even the people in regular clothes have a little something (ferret hand puppet, rabbit ears) to set them apart from the ordinary hotel guests. One man in jeans and a button-down shirt gets up from a couch in the lobby and walks over to the elevator, revealing a fluffy tail dragging behind him. The elevator doors open. Inside, a fellow is kissing a man with antlers on his head.

The other hotel guests look stunned.

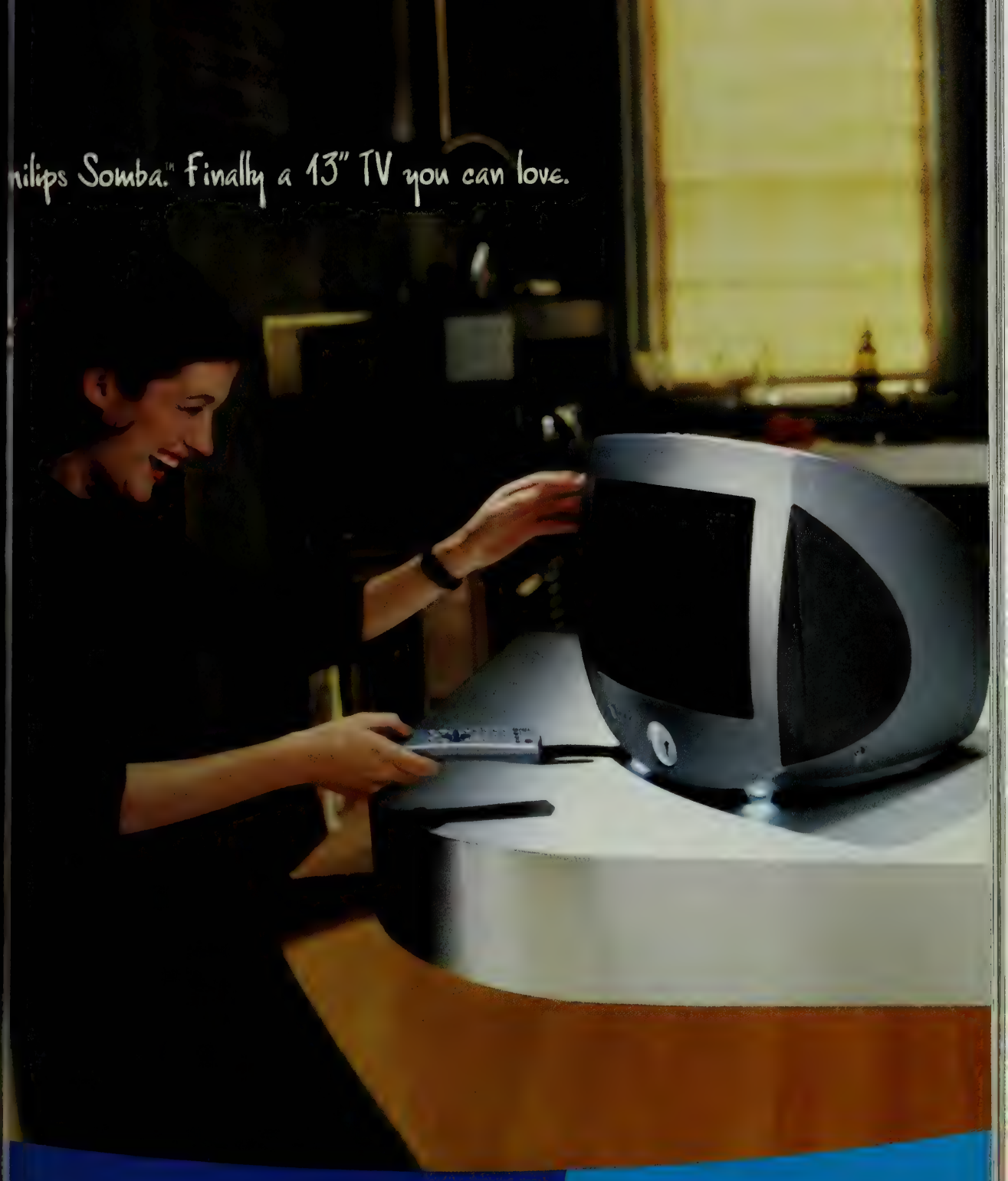
"We're a group of people who like things having to do with animals and cartoons," a man in a tiger suit tells a woman. "We're furries."

"So cute," the woman says.

Welcome to the Midwest FurFest.

Here, a number of "furries"—people

PORTRAITS BY HARRY BENSON



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whose interest in animal characters goes further than an appreciation of *The Lion King*—are gathering together.

At 7:30 P.M., near the front desk, three men known as Pack Rat, Rob Fox, and Zen Wolph are scratching one another's backs—grooming one another, like macaques in a zoo. "Skritching," they call it. I am tempted to turn around and run. Instead I find myself talking with Keith Dickinson, a self-described "computer geek." Not long ago, this man, a 37-year-old from Kansas City, Kansas, was so depressed he could barely bring himself to go to the grocery store. And then it hit him. He started to believe that, somewhere deep down, he was actually . . . a polar bear.

"In normal society," Dickinson says, "two people who hardly know each other do not walk up and scratch each other's backs. But when you're one of the furs, it's one big extended family."

Next to him is his skinny, longhaired, fedora-wearing sidekick, a 23-year-old art student named Ian Johnson (nametag: R. C. RABBITSFOOT). Last year, Johnson, who has brought the ashes of his dead cat to the FurFest, persuaded Dickinson to attend another furry convention in Memphis, and that's what did it.

"It's a new way of looking at the world," Dickinson says. "It's like looking at it with baby eyes, or cub eyes."

"You regress into a child when you come to a convention," Johnson says, "because it's that kind of camaraderie, or childishness."

RIDING WITH OSTRICH

It's night. Ostrich has to run an errand. We get into his Chevrolet Metro and speed away from the Sheraton, toward the nearest mall. The headlights illuminate the road ahead.

Ostrich, whose real name is Marshall Woods, is a compact guy in a denim jacket and blue jeans. He's 39 years old and works as a network administrator at a rubber company in Akron.

"When I was very, very young, I knew I wanted to be some type of animal," he says. "I didn't necessarily want to *be* the animal, but I wanted to have the animal shape, as far back as I can remember. It's that way for a lot of people."

He did normal things, like playing in the high-school marching band . . . but he couldn't stop thinking about cartoon animals. Throughout his teenage and college years, he hid his furriness, thinking it was a "babyish thing."

"What the hell," he says. "Now I'm old and I'm warped, everybody knows it, so I don't bother hiding anything anymore!"

It wasn't until 1994 that he came upon others who shared his interest. He was a chemist at the time, collecting dinosaur stuff on the side. One day he went to a comic-book shop and discovered *Genus*, a furry comic-book series with sexy characters. "And I looked at it and I was like, Whoa! This looks pretty much exactly what I'd like to read—I gotta have one of these," he recalls.

Now he writes a newsletter for Ohio Furs, an organization of furries with 87 members.

He got his name after taking some ballet classes and not being very good at it. "I was sincere but not impressive," he says. "I guess I was technically competent, but not very much fun to watch. And I was compared to the ostrich ballerinas in *Fantasia*. They are trying very hard, but they are not quite there."

In 1998, Ostrich put up a Web site where you can see his animal drawings, his animal-themed poems and short stories (one of which was published in *Pawprints*, a magazine for furries), his instructions on how to build a fursuit, and pictures of himself engaged in animal-centered activities. Like the time he made a solo trip to Sea World. "There's something just inherently cheerful about ducks," reads the text next to one picture on his Web site. "They seem almost ridiculously optimistic about the world and their place in it." Next to a photo of sea lions, the caption reads: "Do they have any idea how cute they look when they beg? Who could refuse them?"

For a while, he concedes, he was a "plushie," which is the word for a person who has a strong—usually erotic—attachment to stuffed animals. He even wrote a plushie newsletter for a while, but gave it up. "It doesn't really interest me now," he says. "I just like to have the stuffed animals around. I would still say I'm a plushophile—I'm just not that interested in it that much sexually. In a casual way, but not really seriously."

He goes into a store and purchases materials for a puppet-making workshop he is scheduled to lead the next day. Back behind the wheel, Ostrich says, "I don't like the human form. I never really have. It does not please me. The body, just the flesh, the general design, I just don't like."

He says he'd prefer to be a lemur or a rabbit and still be intelligent and keep the opposable thumbs. He thinks the technology will be available relatively soon to help him achieve this dream. Talking about all this almost causes Ostrich to miss his exit.

"I. Need. To. Drive. More. Talk. Less."

Eventually, CONTINUED ON PAGE 181

"I didn't necessarily want to *be* the animal, but I wanted to have the animal shape.... It's that way for a lot of people."







FURRIES' NIGHT OUT

Clockwise from top right: Furries show some tail—from left, Scott Hubbard, Zach Taylor, Joey Rufus, Brian Moore, and Chris Eheart. Jeremy Normand (Simba T. Lion) exults. Jeff Ruhnke (BJ Buttons) digs for "plush." Photographed in St. Louis at their New Year's Eve bowling party.

VERSACE


VERSACE




VERSACE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 176 we pull back into a parking space back at the Sheraton.

"A lot of the people here are the very same way. We don't have a lot of deep real-life contact. It's superficial. I kind of skate through society. I mean, you see a lot of people—I see them at work—who have no idea what they're doing, or why, and they sit there and bang along from one hour to the next. As fucked up as I am, I at least know how I feel and what I want to do, and I have the good fortune to have a number of friends who feel the same way."

Ostrich leads me up to his suite.

It's filled with stuffed animals.

"Before I found the organized fandom, I lived in the country," he says. "I lived as far out as I could by preference. But the odd thing is, the longer I do this and the more deeply I get into it, the happier I am in the city and around crowds. I suppose it is, uh, it's probably a symptom of my increasing mental health, or something."

"How are you fucked up?" I ask.

"Everybody's fucked up in some way, I think. Right now I'm happy, yeah. Feeling expansive. Willing to expand on topics and so forth. Talkative."

> "What I'd want is a whole new world where Canada was all raccoons, and the United States was all foxes . . . "

He sits on the chair and says there is a low percentage of women in the fandom, and a preponderance of gay men—or seemingly gay. "I am not really sure myself that as many of them are gay as think they are. It's just more, you like this person because of who they are rather than for their body. And we find as the number of women increases, the number of people who thought they were gay but decided otherwise increases, too. I know a couple people who thought they were gay until they met a furry girl."

He gets up.

"In some ways we're very closed off—sort of a subculture. I have trouble looking at it objectively, because it seems so natural. It's how I was my whole life, and all of a sudden, I'm like, Wow, here's a whole bunch of other people like this! Having not come to it from the outside, I have difficulty saying what it actually is. I'm too deeply into it."

SOME FURRY THEORY

There are many kinds of furries, but they all seem to have a few things in common. Something happened to them after a youthful encounter with Bugs Bunny or Scooby Doo or the mascot at the pep rally. They took refuge in cartoons or science fiction. After being bombarded by tigers telling them what cereal to eat, camels smoking cigarettes, cars named after animals, airplanes with eyes and smiles, shirts with alligators, they decided their fellow human beings were not nearly so interesting as those animal characters.

But it wasn't so liberating, having these intense feelings, when you thought you were the only person on earth who had them. The second big revelation for most furries came when they got on the Internet. Not only were there others like them, they learned, but they were organized! They started having conventions in the early 90s. Now, such gatherings as the Further Confusion convention in San Jose, California, and Anthrocon in Philadelphia, attract more than 1,000 furry hobbyists apiece. (The Midwest FurFest is a smaller "con," with about 400 attending.) There are other conventions, too—even summer camps.

The furry group has its own customs and language. "Yiff" means sex, "yiffy" means horny or sexual, and "yiffing" means mating. "Fur pile" denotes a bunch of furries lying on top of one another, affectionately, while skritching. "Spooge" is semen—a possible outcome of a fur pile. A "furvert" is anyone who is sexually attracted to mascots and such.

Many furries have jobs related to science and computers. They role-play on a Web site called "FurryMUCK," a chatroom kingdom where users pretend they're red-tailed hawks, foxes, and polar bears.

A high number of furries are bearded and wear glasses. Many resemble the animal they identify with (especially wolves and foxes, the most popular "totems"). Some have googly, glazed, innocent eyes. A few are crazy-eyed.

A MOMENT WITH MIKE THE COYOTE

Down in the lobby, a coyote is sitting on a couch. His nametag reads, SHAGGY, but his real name is Mike. Not all the conventioneers want people to know their full names, lest their bosses or parents find out what they're up to on the weekends. Mike the Coyote says he is a security guard in Indiana and has been going to furry conventions since 1992. The Midwest FurFest, he says, is "very mellow so far, rather surprisingly so, in fact. I hope it stays this way. We don't need the weirdies to fall out of the woodwork. For me, walking around a con with a tail hanging out my butt just seems weird. Just not my particular bag."

But Mike the Coyote has something for anyone who finds furriness strange: "Just go look at the Packers and Vikings fans at the game. You think *we're* weird? Look at the 350-pound guy that's got his body split in colors half and half, he's wearing shorts and paint and nothing else, and he's screaming, 'Vikings!' Oh my God! Anybody involved in beauty pageants? Children's beauty pageants, where they dress the little girls like they're 25-year-old prostitutes—which is just *sick*."

"THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT RACCOONS"

One man who didn't make it to the Midwest FurFest is Ostrich's friend Fox Wolfie Galen, the King of the Plushies.

"He's O.K.," says Jack Below, a 28-year-old on-line worker at Southwestern Bell, who doubles as Spiked Punch, a wolf with a mallet. But, Below adds, Fox Wolfie Galen is "one of the people I really worry about. I really don't have anything against him; I just think if people really knew the full story on him, it would kind of set a bad image."

Two months prior to the FurFest, I visited Fox Wolfie Galen, whose real name is Kenneth, at his house in a small Pennsylvania city, where he lives with a roommate and more than a thousand stuffed animals. He was staring at his computer screen, monitoring an on-line auction. He put in a bid of $40.01 for a 40-inch skunk stuffed animal, then lay down on his mattress on the floor.

"I pretty much can't afford to pay more than a dollar an inch for plush," he said, in a voice like that of Bill Murray's gopher-chasing groundskeeper character in *Caddyshack*. "I like skunks. I mostly collect bunnies, foxes, bears, ferrets, otters, sometimes dinosaurs."

Fox Wolfie Galen, aged 39, was wearing a Mickey Mouse sweatshirt, green jeans, and thick, red-tinted glasses. (He said his eyesight is so bad that he receives $500 a month from the government; he has no job; rent is $200 a month.) Stuffed animals surrounded him and were stacked up to the ceiling against the wall by his bed. A big Meeko, the raccoon character from *Pocahontas*, in a Cub Scout uniform was looking at me with a crazed expression.

"That's what I wouldn't mind being in

real life," Fox Wolfie Galen said of the Meeko, which may be the most popular stuffed animal among the plushophiles. Between this one's legs was a little opening, a tear in the seam.

Fox Wolfie Galen had never traveled much beyond his hometown until four years ago, when he went to a furry convention in California with another plushophile he had met on-line. Since then he has made it to conventions in Toronto, Chicago, and Albany, New York.

Plushophilia began for him when he was around seven years old, even though he didn't own any stuffed animals. "From the time I was born until through high school, I probably touched three or four 'plushes,'" he said, using the plushophile's term for a stuffed animal. "It wasn't like I couldn't get them. I was interested; I just didn't make the connection. I knew I liked them, because I'd seen them on TV, or if I visited somebody else's house and they had plush. Or if somebody came along in a furry-animal costume, like a high-school mascot, I'd always sit close to where I'd think they'd be coming out."

After pep rallies he would find himself so aroused that he would have to walk through the school's hallways with a book bag held in front of him. Growing up, he never fantasized about women. "If a mascot walked into a room surrounded by naked women, I'd be thinking about the mascot," he said.

His on-line bid won him the skunk and he turned off the computer. He told me he likes dressing up in full-body animal costumes sometimes, which, in the fandom's parlance, would make him a "fursuiter" as well as a plushie. "In the house usually," he said. "It's not something that's wise to do alone. Run into a gang of teenagers and you're liable to get beat up or set on fire. I've talked to so many people and sometimes you'll see news stories where they've beat up mascots and stuff, and the media seems to make that popular."

He grew up in the country. The closest store was five miles away. He liked to stay indoors watching cartoons or playing board games or reading science fiction and books about animals.

In high school, he said, he experimented with bestiality. "Usually German shepherds, Labrador retrievers, size-compatible things," he said. "It all started because the dog started it. The dog would come and start trying to hump your leg and I'd be like, Wow, that's interesting. I was at that age where I was learning to see what made things work. I don't do it anymore."

At a nearby university, he majored in speech communication and drank himself "into stupidity" one semester. After college he lived with a woman in a wheelchair, and cared for her for nine years. At one point he got engaged to another woman, but broke it off. He preferred plush.

"I'm not like a person who hasn't had a human mate before," he said. "I actually have been with four different women in my life, and I can honestly say that none of them have come close to the tactile physical pleasure. Women don't feel like that. Human skin might feel good, it's smooth and everything, but it just doesn't feel the same way."

For a long time he thought he was the only plushophile on the planet. " 'Plushie' didn't exist in my vocabulary," he said. Then, in 1994, he discovered a Web site that captured his interest. There were some frequently asked questions such as "Why do you have sex with stuffed animals?," "Do you actually *go* on your stuffed animals?," and "How do you clean your stuffed animals?"

"I'm reading this and I was like, Oh my gosh, somebody else does this? I almost fell over."

He started his own Web site. There, you can see sexually explicit photos from furry conventions, doctored cartoon stills, and his short stories.

Fox Wolfie Galen said he does have intercourse with his stuffed animals but more often rubs himself externally on the fur. He doesn't believe the stuffed raccoon is alive ... but he can dream, can't he?

"I'll look at his eyes, and I'm thinking, Oh, it's alive," he said. "There are people who do kinkier things than me with their plush. Some people put openings in all their plush. Some people even pray to their plushies. There's mutilators. That disturbs me, because they're turned on by destruction of something, and I see no reason for it."

It was getting late. He was still lying on his mattress, now discussing "crush" videos—a recently outlawed form of pornography made for men who like



HE'S AN ANIMAL Marshall Woods (Ostrich), in raccoon costume, isn't comfortable with the human form. Photographed at his home in Fairlawn, Ohio, on January 10, 2001.



JUNE

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MAY

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31						

JULY

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to watch animals being crushed by women.

"I consider that immoral," he said. "You heard of Jeffrey Dahmer? He started out doing that stuff. If you could do it to an animal, you could do it to a human."

He said he wished it were possible to be part man and part beast. But if such a thing were to come about—the advent of hybrid species—he wouldn't want to be alone.

"If I was the only one, they'd find out. They'd put me in a lab and dissect me. You know, it wouldn't be fun. What I'd want is a whole new world where you had, say, Canada was all raccoons, and the United States was all foxes, and Mexico's all badgers, and every country is a different race of animals, and they're all friendly with each other and there's no war."

In an ideal world, Fox Wolfie Galen would be a ferret, a rat, a skunk, a fox, or a raccoon. "There's something about raccoons. They actually have fingers, opposable thumbs and everything. I could imagine a raccoon being half a human and walking on two feet. It would kind of be like a living Disney cartoon."

But the government would screw it up, he figured.

"They'd probably make some hybrid human resistant to attack, something reptilian, scaly, and hard to kill. So you're probably going to have a whole bunch of alligator men or turtle-shelled men running around. They'll be intelligent, but they'll be slaves to whatever the government wants them to do, like go and kill people. I would only volunteer if we were to be considered at least remotely equal. I'd be a raccoon, most likely."

I called a taxi and went to the bathroom. When I came back to his lair, Fox Wolfie Galen was in a full-body tiger suit. He was gesturing to a rip in the costume, between his legs.

The taxi arrived.

Outside his house, Fox Wolfie Galen was waving good-bye to me—with a fox hand puppet.

CALLING DR. PERVERT

Sex researcher Katharine Gates has written about Fox Wolfie Galen, among others, in her book *Deviant Desires: Incredibly Strange Sex* (Juno Books, 2000). Now she was sitting down in the living room of her Brooklyn Heights apartment, where she lives with her husband. In the book, Fox Wolfie Galen called sex with stuffed animals a "sacramental act."

ARE YOU FURRY? A QUICK QUIZ
Are you *very* interested in this W.N.B.A. mascot, *right*, the New York Liberty's Maddie? Then you may be furry, as are "Wolfus," *below*, shown here at the Midwest FurFest, and the two "fursuiters," *bottom*, at the bowling party in St. Louis.







"Everything is fetish fodder. I can't think of anything in this world that couldn't be sexualized."

"How can you not laugh?" Gates said. "I mean, because it's absurd. Even ordinary sex is pretty damn absurd when you think about it. It's pretty silly, it's pretty awkward, and so I don't think it would be fair to point the finger entirely at these people—but, no, it's funny. And the people who do it for the most part have a great sense of humor about it. Galen is a good example."

Gates, who is 36 years old, said some plushophiles may not be "relationship-suitable": "In some cases—and this might be cruel to say—but we may be wired for the zeta male, the lowest male, to turn to other pursuits besides the pursuit of another human being. These people need a way of having intimacy and pleasure, too."

Gates's book features chapters on fat admiration, pony play, balloon fetishists, and, on the dark side, the crush freaks. Her Web site, deviantdesires.com, has a forum in which different fetishists can talk to one another—the women who masturbate with bathtub toy boats can talk to the plushies, and so on.

She opened a cabinet and found a video called *Smush,* made by Jeff Vilencia, whose work is admired by crush enthusiasts.

"Jeff's quite the artiste," Gates said. "This film has actually played at a bunch of film festivals all over the world."

We watched. A pudgy woman appeared and then ... worm after worm after worm began exploding under her footsteps. "I love to step on worms with my big feet," said the woman, actress Erika Elizondo. "I love to smush worms. I love to tease them when I press them down softly at first. I am going to step on you and *smush* you!"

Clearly, we were at the other end of the sexual spectrum from the gentle plushophiles. The men who enjoy these videos, Gates said, like to imagine themselves at the mercy of all-powerful goddesses.

"Mmmm, I am stepping on *youuuu!*" the actress was saying.

Splat.

"They are no match for my big, beautiful feet!"

Squiishhhhh.

"That was the come shot," Gates said. "You want to see it again?"

There are probably no more than 1,500 crushers out there, Gates believes. They got some exposure last year through the ABC legal drama *The Practice,* on which Henry Winkler had a recurring role as a dentist who liked to watch women in the act of stomping on bugs. In 1999 there was a crushing death in Florida: a 28-year-old Okeechobee man named Bryan Loudermilk, deeply into the fetish, managed to have his pickup truck rolled over his body. He was killed.

Hollywood people such as Mickey Roo-


NORDSTROM

ney and Loretta Swit have made their opposition to crush videos a cause célèbre. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals is not a fan. Congress voted against the sale of crush videos in 1999, and President Clinton quickly signed the ban into law. Not even the American Civil Liberties Union came to the aid of Mr. Vilencia and his ilk.

"It's gross, it's disturbing, it's sort of upsetting," Gates said—but she calls the government ban "stupid." It should definitely be illegal to stomp on a cat or a dog or a monkey, she believes, but bugs and worms? "I'm not saying they're disposable, but to get up into arms about that is really a distortion," Gates said. "I have shot animals in the past as a hunter, so I can't take the sort of moral high ground. No, I don't jerk off while I'm shooting a groundhog, no, I don't derive a sense of pleasure from this torture, but in the end I don't think that the laws against these videos are appropriate."

Gates admitted she was a pervert, but only in the fantasy realm. "Little Red Riding Hood," for example: "I think that's incredibly sexy, and when I was a kid I used to masturbate to the fantasy of being eaten by a pack of wolves. And I still find that sort of an exciting image. I can call that into my head when necessary."

She likes furry stuff, too. "Take my word for it, I've got a really dirty mind, and my dirty mind has gone to places that are beyond the pale. I think amputee stuff is hot, I think furry stuff is hot, I think slash fiction's hot, but as far as acting stuff out . . . I mean, I've ridden pony boys and pony girls"—people dressed up with bridles and saddles, etc.—"and I found that very exciting, but I'm uninclined to ask my husband to put on a saddle. And we find the ordinary, old vanilla stuff completely satisfying and very, very perfect."

She considers the plushophiles to have a lot in common with practitioners of vanilla sex. "They may think about sex as often as we do, which is often, and they may think of stuffed animals instead of Pamela Anderson, but they're very ordinary people," she said. "Sex is not just what happens to the genitals. Everything is fetish fodder. I can't think of anything in this world that couldn't be sexualized by somebody."

A BADGER SPEAKS

Back at the convention, it's rehearsal time in the Sheraton's Chicago Room. Onstage, a chicken puppet is "*bock-bock-bock*"-ing along to "Born to Be Wild." An engineer from Long Island named Lincoln (nametag: J. BADGER) sits down at a table. "You have to understand something," he says. "I was a very shy person. And a couple years ago, something broke, and I'm not shy anymore. Then I became a manager at work and so it improved my whole life!"

I ask J. Badger if there was wild sex going on at the con. "I don't want to know about it. And I think it's up to the con committee to keep that out of public view. The public should not even be aware." He has heard about "things" that went on at furry conventions in California, with its large population of wild San Francisco–based furries and its nexus of furrydom near Disneyland. J. Badger prefers a family-oriented furry experience. "If you don't make it for the kids, you will not have a next generation," he says.

A few rows ahead of J. Badger, a guy is skritching a pal's neck with his bear claw. "You have to understand, that is just human affection; that has nothing to do with furry," J. Badger says.

Besides gardening and volunteer work, these days J. Badger attends about 10 furry and science-fiction conventions a year. "I also do other conventions that I will not talk about," he says. "There are other conventions that are for adults only and I go to those."

Onstage now, three bears are playing air fiddle and plastic fish for guitars while a hillbilly song plays. It has a catchy chorus:

Wearing my mask, yay!
Looking like a bear, yay!
Wearing my mask and looking like a bear
I'm a rac-cooooon!

THE FURRY SHOW

Now it's showtime. The Chicago Room is full of furries.

"Y'all ready for a good three, four hours of entertainment?" says Tyger Cowboy, the master of ceremonies.

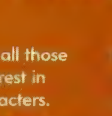
Babs Bunny is the first act. Basically, it

HOW TO TALK FURRY

Feeling "yiffy"? Before you join up with the "furry fandom," take a moment to study its argot

everyfur *n.* A term for all those with a pronounced interest in animals or animal characters.

fur pile *n.* Three or more people in animal costumes lying on top of one another while engaged in scratching, cuddling, and other physical expressions of affection or sexual desire.



furrotica *n.* A form of pornography featuring fantastic animals, animal characters, or human-animal hybrids.

furry *n.* A person who identifies very strongly with animals or animal characters (such as Mickey Mouse or Bugs Bunny). <"I realized I was a furry when I got my first Tickle Me Elmo.">

furry fandom *n.* The loosely organized group of people who enjoy dressing up as, or fantasizing about, animals or animal characters. Also, **the fandom**.



fursuiter *n.* A person who dresses up in full-body animal costumes for fun or sexual excitement.

furvert *n.* A person with strong sexual feelings for animal characters or for people who dress up as animals. <"All these furverts are ruining the fandom.">



mundanes *pl. n.* People who do not have strong feelings for, or a fantasy life involving, animals or animal characters. <"The mundanes just don't understand.">

plush *n.* A stuffed animal. <"I just paid $20 for some nice bear plush.">

plushie *n.* 1. A plushophile. 2. A stuffed animal.

plushophile *n.* 1. A person who is fond of stuffed animals. 2. A person who is sexually intimate with stuffed animals. <"Those plushophiles are giving this furry convention a bad name.">

skritch *v.* To use the fingernails or claws of an animal costume to dig or scrape the body or animal costume of another person. <"To scratch is human, to skritch divine.">



species dysphoria *n.* A term denoting deep unhappiness with the human form and an intense longing for transformation, possibly through bioengineering, into animals or human-animal hybrids.



spooge *n.* Semen. —*v.* To ejaculate. <"He spooged on his Barney."> —**spoogey,** *adj.*

therianthrope *n.* A person who shifts from human to animal form, either mentally or through wearing animal costumes.

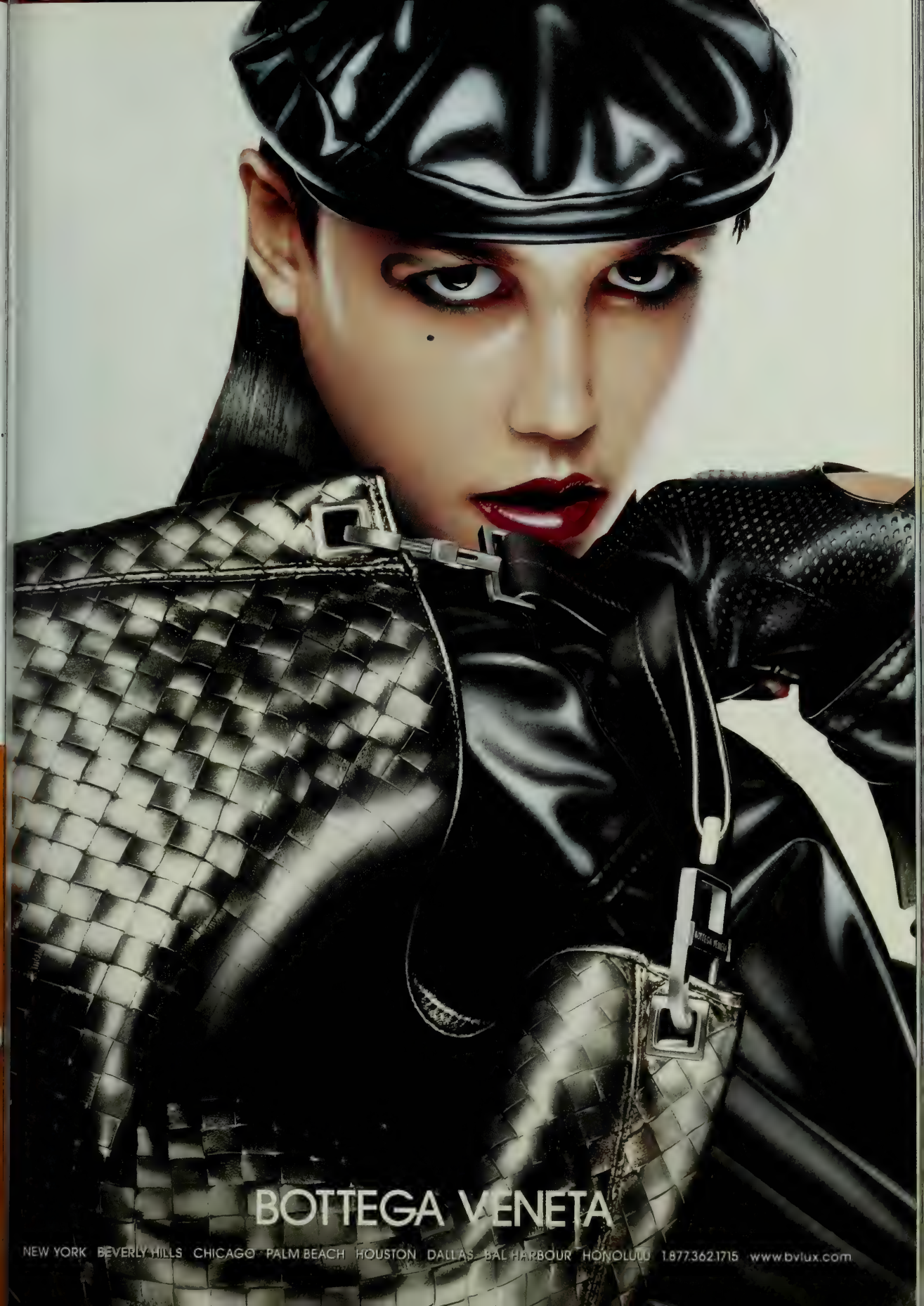
toonophile *n.* A person unusually fond of animal cartoon characters.

totem *n.* An animal or animal character that a person especially identifies with or longs to be. <"My totem used to be a fox; now it's a wolf.">



yiff *n.* 1. Sexual activity between people who have a strong interest in animals or animal characters. 2. The noise made by a fox. —*v.* To engage in furry sex.

yiffy *adj.* 1. Sexually aroused or horny, esp. when this feeling is brought on by contemplation of, or proximity to, animal characters or other people who imagine themselves as animals or animal characters. <"The sight of that fur pile got me yiffy."> 2. Erotic. <"Her fox drawings are quite yiffy.">


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is someone in a bunny outfit hopping around while singing Cyndi Lauper's "Girls Just Want to Have Fun" in a high-pitched voice.

A group of furries in cat regalia do a few songs from *Grease*. A little boy in the front—a son of the convention chairman, Robert King—has his fingers in his ears.

The Squirrelles sing "You Can't Hurry Love." An Elmo muppet does "Tiptoe Through the Tulips." Ten seconds into the number, a wolf creeps up and rips Elmo apart. The place goes nuts.

THE FURRIES VS. THE U.S. ARMY

The next morning, at 11:50, the lobby is full of furries and . . . soldiers in camouflage gear. The 85th Army Reserve Division, headquartered in Arlington Heights, happens to be having a convention here, too—a commanders' conference, during which they're to go over what took place in 2000, and set goals for 2001. The furries in the lobby look baffled. A few military men are smirking. One square-jawed hard-ass stares at a rabbit-eared furry for a moment and, finally, says, "Yeah!" It's sarcastic. He sounds like a high-school jock sizing up the class freak.

"Unusual," says a Sergeant Major Jennings.

"I think it's comical, myself," says one of his subordinates.

"God bless America," says the other.

Ostrich comes tearing past them, saying, "The fursuit parade's about to start!" Soon, about 40 people in mascotwear—the fursuiters—are marching quietly through the lobby. Flashbulbs pop. Furries in civilian clothes reach out to touch the fursuiters as they go by.

A big puppy.

A wolf with a huge mallet.

A bear eating a raccoon.

"Show us some tail, baby!" says a furry bystander.

"I didn't know rabbits were in season," says an army guy.

A Lieutenant Colonel Flowers is taking it all in, good-naturedly. "A little unusual," he says. "Of course, they'd probably say the same thing about us."

A half-kangaroo walks by.

"Pretty good, pretty good, pretty imaginative," the lieutenant colonel says. "What are they, an advocacy group?"

Another lieutenant colonel, named Farrar, is unfazed. "Well, when you see people wearing dog collars and chains . . . you know, I went to college," he says. "It doesn't take much of an imagination to figure out what these people might be doing behind closed doors. The clean aspect, O.K., these guys are cartoon figures, I can see that. But if you go a little *left* of that, then suddenly you're adding a new dimension to it. It doesn't make me very comfortable. Certainly nothing I agree with. Tantric sex comes to mind. People that have problems." He thinks some more. "But we're all getting along!" Without hesitation, he poses for a picture with a brown bear.

Another man in uniform, Lieutenant Patrick George, is chatting with a young raccoon. "This is something nice to bring kids to," Lieutenant George says.

The raccoon suggests there might be no more war if everyone adopted the furry attitude toward life. Lieutenant George smiles. "There will always be wars as long as there's people on this earth," he says.

"Not if they all pretend to be animals," the raccoon says, then rejoins the parade.

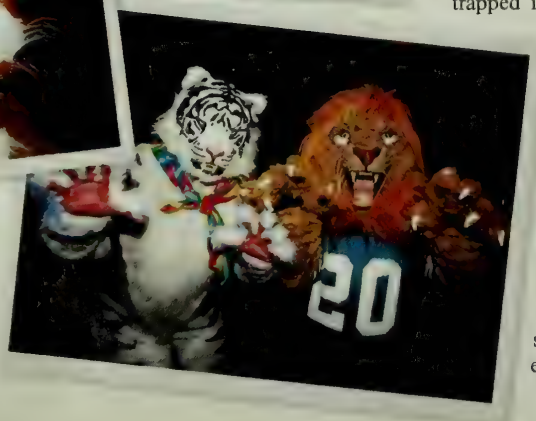
Lieutenant George has been watching some of the furries. "Touchy-feely, with each other," he says. "I noticed that last night. They're scratching each other and laying in the lap. You don't have to be too smart to figure it out. It's easy." He stops his friendly chuckling, however, when he learns he has been chatting with a guy who might *really* want to be a raccoon.

"That's different," he says. "But different people have different beliefs in this world. We can't be the same, we're all individuals. So to each his own."

"I am a tiger in a human body. I am very neurotic about having my paws sticky. They have to be washed."







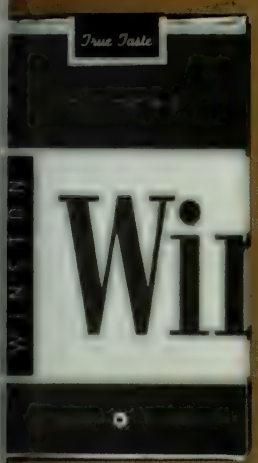
PLUSH NATION
"Babs Bunny," *top*, sings "Girls Just Want to Have Fun" at the Midwest FurFest. *Above*, puppeteer Steve Plunkett with his puppet Scarlett at the FurFest. *Right*, furry leader Christopher Roth (Tyger Cowboy) and Jeremy Normand (Simba T. Lion) at the bowling party.

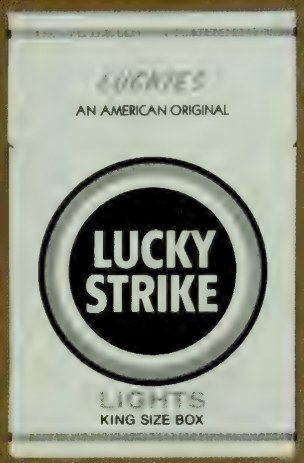
A SKRITCH SESSION

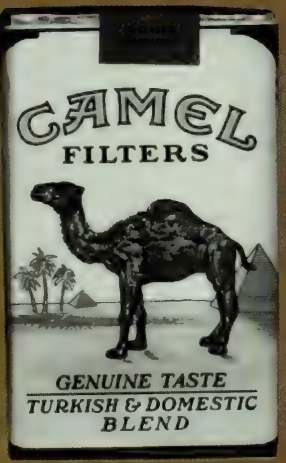
The Eagles are playing loud inside Trophies, the hotel sports bar. Football is on the big screens. The crack of pool balls can be heard over "Hotel California." Tyger Cowboy is holding court at a table and working on a Reuben and an iced tea. His real name is Christopher Roth, and he's a 36-year-old travel agent who has booked flights for many of the furries present. "I am a tiger in a human body, yes. I am very feline. I am very neurotic about having my paws sticky. They have to be washed. Yecch!"

Roth lives in St. Louis, with his mate, Jack Below (Spiked Punch), the wolf trapped in a human body. They're both well-known furries, and they run ARF, a support group of furries, who do things together such as visit hospitals and volunteer at the zoo. Tyger Cowboy, who has been in the fandom for three years, also runs the UniFURsal mailing list in St. Louis. He was picked on growing up. He lived near a nature preserve and was very "animal-oriented." Later, he says, he played semi-pro hockey and CONTINUED ON PAGE 193

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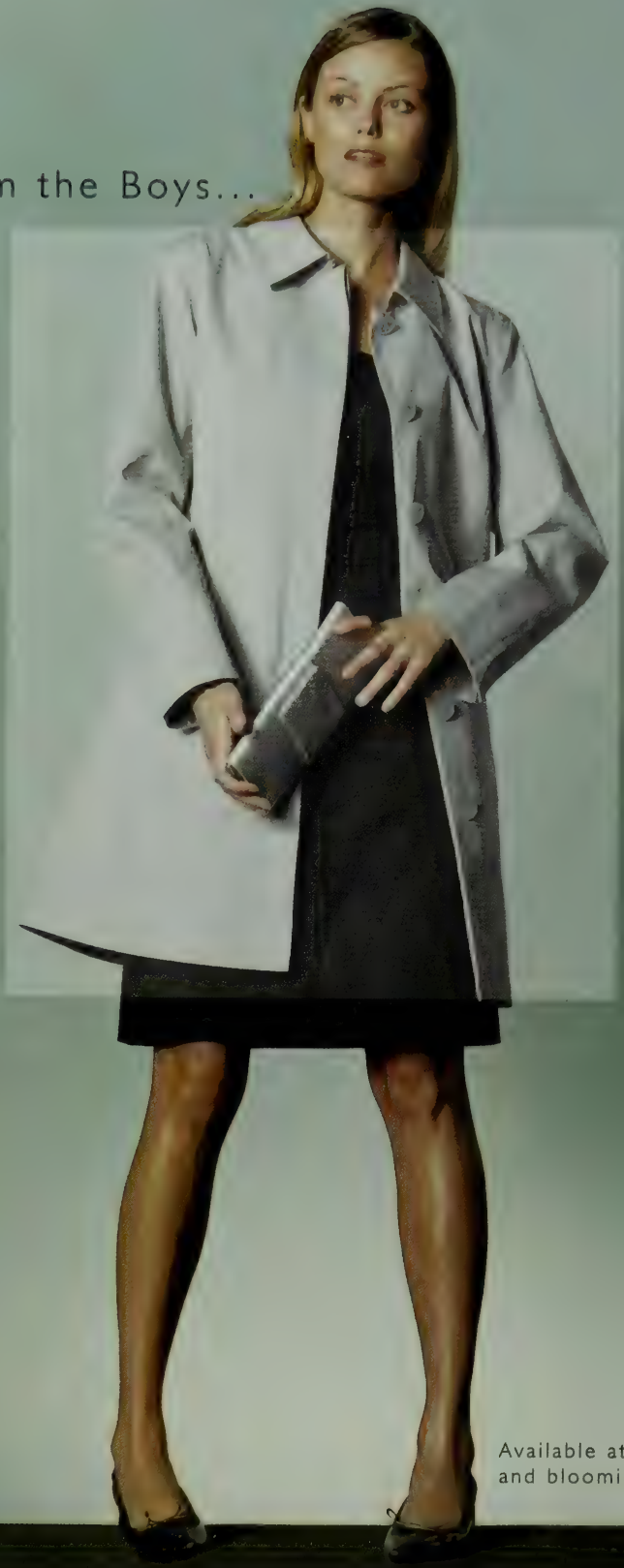
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WEATHERPROOF
GARMENT COMPANY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 188 rode broncos in the Texas Gay Rodeo. But now he lives for furrydom.

The guy next to him is wearing a dog collar and a black T-shirt that reads, BAD DOG. NO BISCUIT. His name is Robert Norton. He is 23 years old and works at Wal-Mart while attending technical school in Wisconsin, but he's really a . . . "I'm a Rottweiler," he says. "A lot of my friends used to say I acted like a canine, especially Rottweilers. I've had Rottweiler breeders tell me I remind them of one of their dogs. Certain expressions I do. I chew on furniture. Little mannerisms. If somebody says the wrong thing and it upsets me, I've been known to spontaneously start growling at them without realizing it. I kind of got myself in trouble at work doing that. I growled at a customer."

It's time for the charity auction, and Tyger Cowboy has to get into his seven-foot tiger-kitten costume; he is offering a five-minute skritch to benefit Tiger Haven in Tennessee, an animal sanctuary damaged by a fire in which four tiger cubs died.

Up in Room 822 ("Furry Central," they were calling it), Tyger Cowboy strips down to his tight white briefs. Norton, morphing into his Rottweiler persona, gets on the floor and begins gnawing on a chair. Behind him is another man who fancies himself a Rottweiler; he gives Norton a vigorous back rub. Rottweiler number one starts exhaling loudly. "He's drooling again," Tyger Cowboy says. "Felines rule, dogs drool."

He puts on his tiger head and then, with his right paw, beckons me closer to him. He put his claws on my head . . . and gives me my first skritch.

"You have a cat?" he says.

"Yes."

"Just think. You've been petted by a cat!"

THE COFFEE MUG OF DREAMS

The bespectacled auctioneer is Dr. Samuel Conway (furry name: Uncle Kage). He's a biomedical researcher and a furry celebrity of sorts. He is auctioning off the mallet belonging to Tyger Cowboy's mate, Spiked Punch.

"Spiked will give you a nice big hug if you buy his mallet," Uncle Kage says theatrically. It sells for a hundred dollars.

Soon, Uncle Kage is showcasing a coffee mug with Native American art depicting the transformation of a young brave into a wolf. "Don't we all wish—isn't this all of our dreams? I have $30 for the mug that depicts our dream, the transformation of a man into a wolf—let's hope he stays that way, because it's unthinkable to go back . . . *Sold* for $30!"

THE CAT AND THE FOX

In the vendors' room, furries are buying comic books, cartooning kits, swords, axes, and tomahawks. A sign on a table reads, NO CHILDREN. Behind it is a wild-haired, busty woman named Bushy Cat. She is an artist whose drawings show erotic furry fantasies, with fantastic anatomies drawn in glorious detail.

Back in 1997, Bushy Cat was going nowhere. Her animal art wasn't selling at craft fairs. "I was ready to work at McDonald's," she says. "I wasn't clearing any money at all, and no recognition."

Then she went to Anthrocon in Philadelphia, where she found out what sells. With binders full of X-rated drawings, she went to conventions in Tennessee, California, Washington—all over—and put in 30,000 miles on Greyhound.

Jurann Foxtail, a 24-year-old dot-com worker, stops by. He is a "huge collector" of "yiffy" art. He says his life changed after he saw Disney's *The Fox and the Hound* at age four. "For weeks I begged my parents to be the fox," he says. "I wanted to *be* the fox. 'I want to be the fox, Mommy, I want to be the fox!' 'You can't be the fox, you're a person!' 'Oh, that's no fun.'"

> "Obviously, I'd like to rework my body.... I'd want a tail, I'd want some fur and some cute cartoon eyes."

FOX TALK

It's Saturday evening, and a discussion group, "Foxes in the Fandom," is in progress. It is moderated by a pudgy, bearded man who goes by the name Craig Fox. About two dozen males are present; half look like foxes. Like Randy Foxx and Phallon. And Rowdy Fox, smiling naughtily as his fox hand puppet nibbles on his free hand.

"Do you think movies and books portray foxes evil more, or good more?" Mr. Fox the moderator asks.

"If the main character was a mouse or a rabbit, then the fox would be the evil villain," says Denver, a longhaired guy in an ELTONJOHN.COM T-shirt. "It also depends if the main character is, for example, a lion. I've run into a couple where the fox is a bumbling sidekick. It depends on basically the line of the food chain with who's the star."

"Right," says Mr. Fox. "Um, another thing about foxes, in general, is that—how can I say this?—the fandom looks upon them as extremely yiffy. Why do you think that is?"

There is some giggling.

"If you want to go yiffy," Mr. Fox continues, "let's look at the rabbits! Whereas foxes actually mate for life, as a general rule."

Now it's time for tales of real-life fox encounters.

"Has anyone been around an actual fox?" the moderator asks, before telling of how he once went to a petting zoo, where red foxes sat on his head and licked his face.

Denver says he has had 12 encounters with foxes, all in the wild. "There is one fox that lives in Gloucester, Massachusetts, that apparently likes me, because he has been staring in my window *all* night."

Everyone laughs hard.

After everyone agrees that it would be wrong to have a fox as a pet, there is a pause.

"What would people like to see the image of the fox be in the new millennium?" Mr. Fox asks. "What would you like to see, foxwise?"

"I got a question," says a woman in the back. She is half bat, half cat. "What's everyone's passion for foxes? Because I don't know anything about it."

THE GRIFFIN IN THE BAR

Matt Davis, a slender 30-year-old dude with black close-cropped hair, is in the hotel bar. His T-shirt reads, MY SEXUAL PREFERENCE IS NOT YOU. Davis drove up to the Midwest FurFest with a few other furs from Arkansas. He's a security guard and furry artist who fantasizes about being a griffin, which would make him half eagle, half lion.

"I'd be a security-guard griffin," he says. "I could fly and patrol the area." He would have a griffin mate who would look like him but "a little bit thinner-boned" and "adorable."

"I've had fantasies that I've spent a long hunt through the forest catching my prey and bringing home to my nest moose and deer, something like that. Something large. Carrying it home to my nest, where my mate is waiting for me, and after eating, we engage in ferocious sex and fall asleep cuddling together in the nest."

With him is a rotund fellow with long blond hair. He says he is the March Hare (real name: O. Holcomb). "Being human, first of all, we're not all that





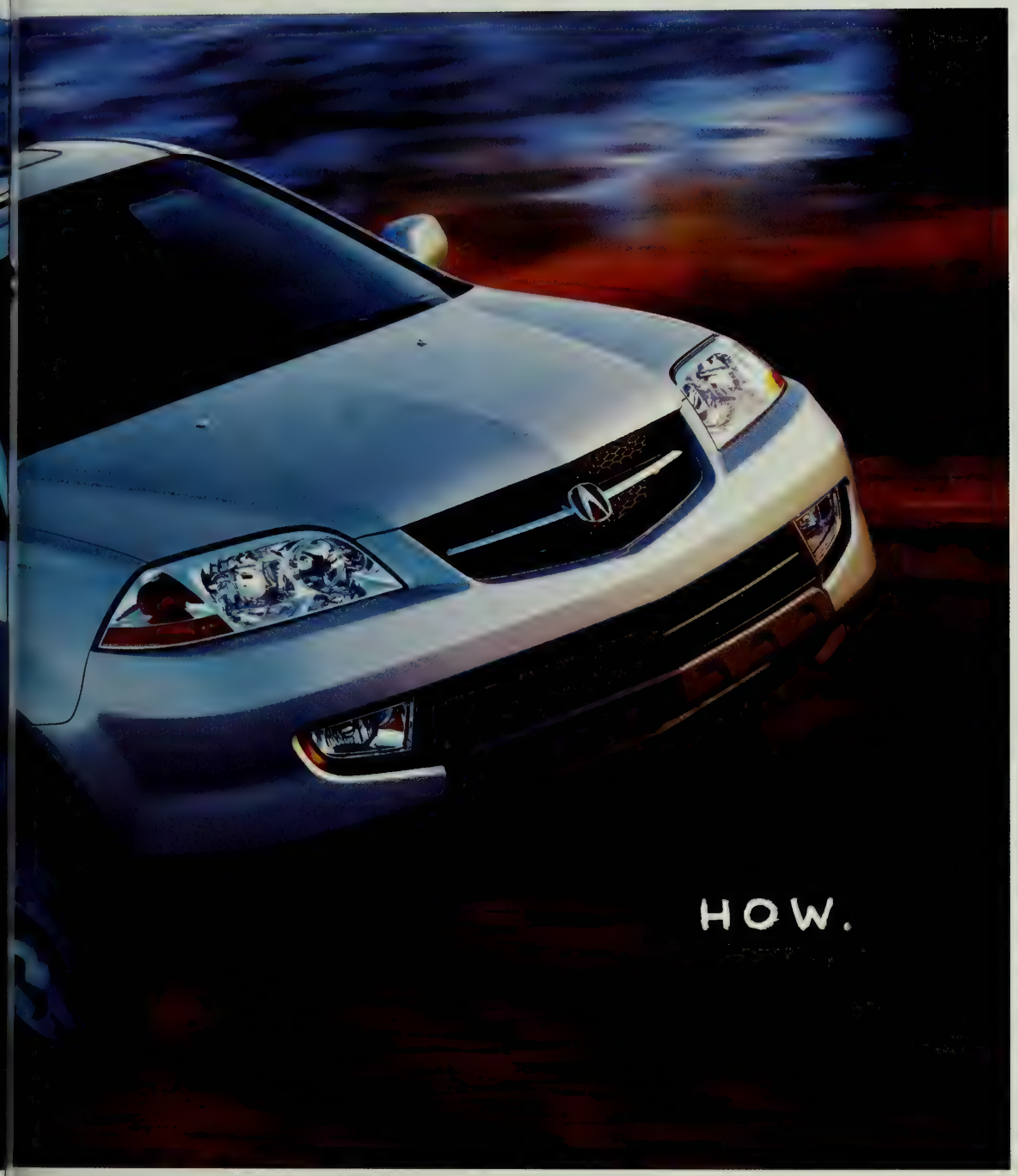


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BUY HER BOOK OR THE WOLF GETS IT *Deviant Desires* author Katharine Gates, with her handgun. Photographed at her home in Brooklyn Heights, January 8, 2001.

cute," he says. "In fact, we're butt-ass ugly. Second of all, intelligence, while it is a wonderful thing, is not that wonderful. Having what we think is understanding and then realizing it's *not* is more painful than being hunted down and killed by your predator." Being furry, on the other hand, is a solution to life. "It gives me thunder," says the March Hare. "I can walk into any situation and go, 'I am the dude!' It's like having a switch, a psychological switch you can tap into and turn something on." It helps even when he's flipping burgers. "You have 30 orders up there," he says. "If I wasn't the hare, I wouldn't be fast enough to get those 30 orders out—and in under three minutes—and be the dude."

THE FURRY-HATERS

Later on in the bar, at two A.M., a dozen 30-ish patrons, part of a wedding party, are making noise. I hear the word "faggots."

"They're freaks," says a blonde who gives her name as Sylvia.

"No," says Johnny. "*Star Trek* people that have lost *Star Trek*. Now they run around with mouse costumes on. Very disturbing."

"A bunch of *freaks* running around!" Sylvia insists. "What is the purpose of the fur costume?"

"Pretty much guys that can't deal with society," Johnny says. "There's more to it than the costumes—they're blatant homosexuals."

"Bestiality!" Sylvia says.

"It's a shame, because there's a lot of people here who are getting the wrong impression of Chicago," says Johnny. "Like, a bunch of queers running around in a mouse costume. It, uh, it just makes me sick. Whitey!"

Whitey comes over. He is wearing a Phish shirt and a red University of Wisconsin cap. "Oh, these fucking clowns running around?" says Whitey, who is drinking whiskey, smoking a Dunhill, and swaying a bit. "I'd love to take my 10/22 and take a couple plink shots at them!"

Today is the opening day of deer season, and Whitey missed it because of his "dumb-ass" friend's wedding.

"Freaks," Sylvia says, cracking up.

Still, Whitey says he is not one to "fucking cast judgment on anybody. And if that's their bag of tricks, that's cool, but it's just kind of like, I just think I could come up with a better hobby." For example? "Killing real animals," he says. "Snowmobiling."

FURRY COMEDOWN

Sunday is the comedown day. At noon, furries are catching vans to the airport. Uncle Kage, the biomedical researcher and auctioneer, is in the lobby, still wearing his white lab coat. "They put little bears with sweaters in our cribs," he is saying. "We have cartoons where rabbits make us laugh. Shirts with little alligators on them. Anthropomorphic animals are part of our culture."

R. C. Rabbitsfoot comes over with his dead cat's ashes in a soup can and hands it to Uncle Kage, who looks puzzled.

About 40 furries are in the lobby now. They're hugging and skritching one another good-bye.

"I'm going to cry when I leave here," says the March Hare. "Probably everyone's going to. That's my closing statement."

TOWARD A FURRY FUTURE

A month after the Midwest FurFest, I call Ostrich at his apartment in Ohio. He has been sitting around drawing a picture of a fox and playing with his cat. The FurFest was a success, he says. "I've heard nothing but good about it," Ostrich says. "I've heard two complaints about it, and they're both from known malcontents." He confirms there was a fair amount of wild sex at the convention: "Oh, yeah, I know there was for a fact. I probably would have been involved in it if I hadn't been so busy."

Was he still hopeful about the possibility of genetic engineering?

"Oh, yeah. That's pretty much the future of the world—there's no way around it. If I can live another 30 or 40 years, I might live several hundred more. Obviously, I'd like to rework my body to make my physical body conform more to my body image. I'd want a tail, I'd want some fur, and, basically, some cute cartoon eyes and stuff. The technology for that's coming. I don't think it's as far off as most people think." □



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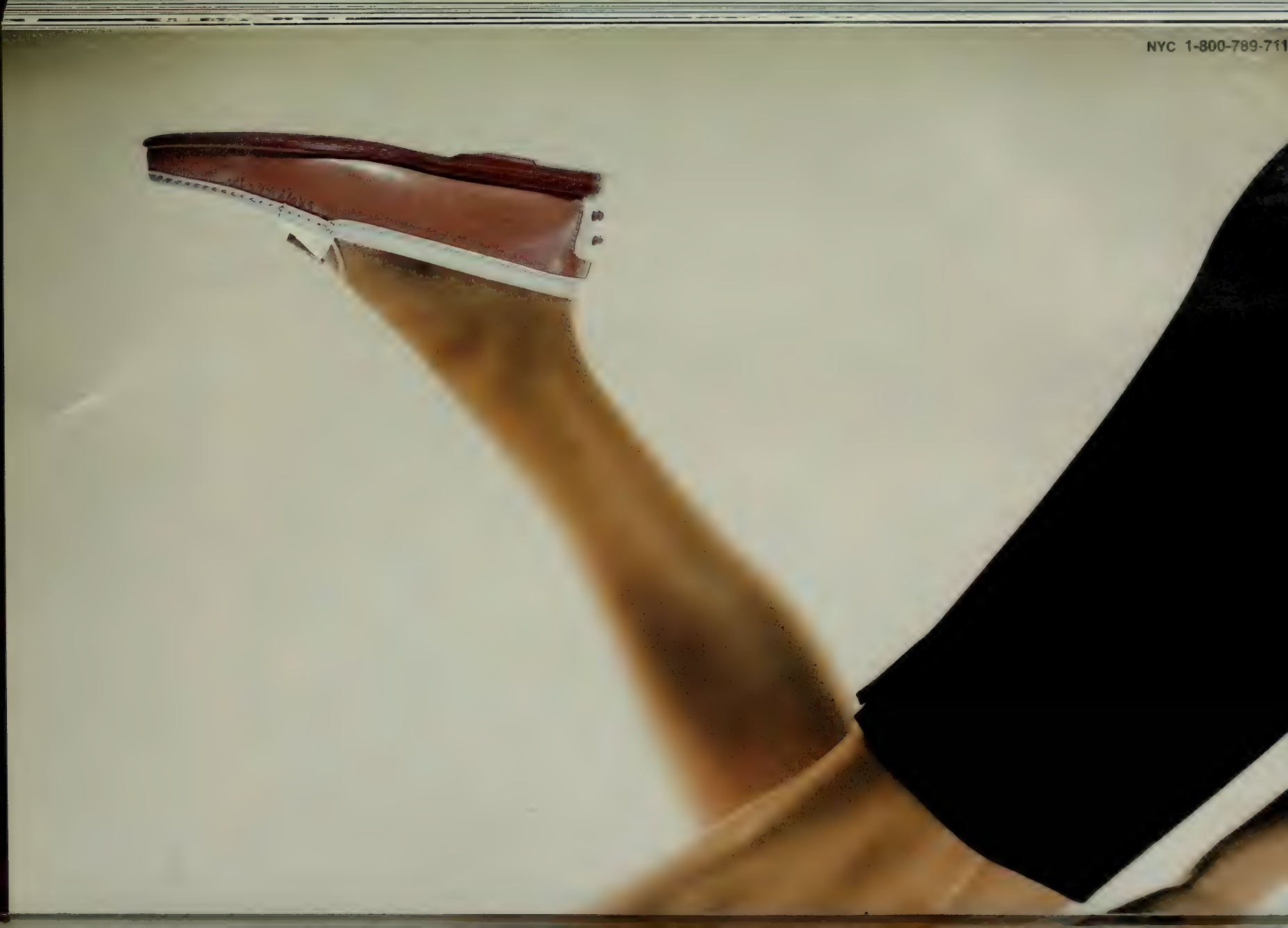


Vincent Lecavalier

OCCUPATION: Hockey player, Tampa Bay Lightning. **AGE:** 20. **PROVENANCE:** Ile Bizard, Canada (a suburb of Montreal). **HOW HE KNOWS HE'S NOT IN CANADA ANYMORE:** "In Montreal every TV show, every radio show—everything is about hockey. In Tampa, there are three reporters after the games." **HE'S ALWAYS BEEN A BIT PRECOCIOUS:** "When I was born, my dad gave me a hockey stick, and I started skating when I was two and a half." Eighteen years later, he was the first pick in the 1998 National Hockey League entry draft. **O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!** At the age of 19, he became the youngest team captain in N.H.L. history. "That first day, in warm-up, I kept looking at the *C* on my jersey. I just couldn't believe it." **HEIR HOCKEY, ANYONE?** Lecavalier has been called "the Michael Jordan of hockey" and is being compared to Wayne Gretzky. "It's very flattering, but those are pretty big shoes to fill. I'm only 20 years old, and the only thing I want to do is get better every day."

—STEPHEN A. LEVEY

PHOTOGRAPH BY SACHA WALDMAN


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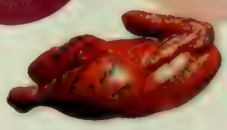
Common Grounds

The world as a series of sets and subsets

BY HENRY ALFORD



[Disney]
Fig. 1



[Chervil]
Fig. 2

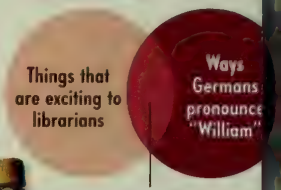




[Stephen King]
Fig. 3

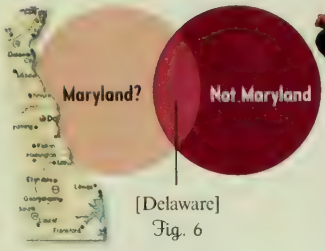


[Iceland]
Fig. 4

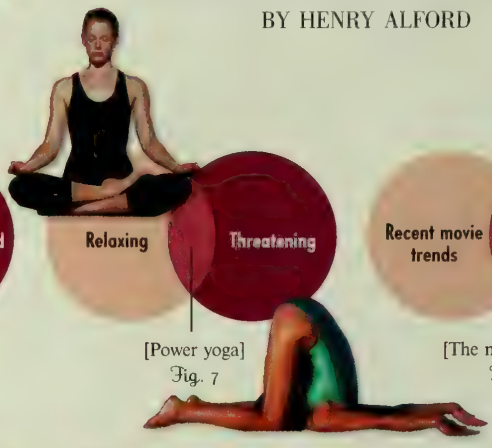


[Vellum]
Fig. 5





[Delaware]
Fig. 6



[Power yoga]
Fig. 7



[The male weepie]
Fig. 8



[Ethyl]
Fig. 9



[Tommy Lee Jones]
Fig. 10



[Sandra Day O'Connor]
Fig. 11



[Chekhov]
Fig. 12

NIGHT TABLE READING



RITA MORENO
actress, Oz (HBO)

Me Talk Pretty One Day,
by David Sedaris (Little, Brown).
"In this collection of essays, the author deals with events in his life that, although unique, still have a universal resonance. The writing is a brilliant mixture of the hilarious and the poignant. It is one of those rare works to be savored and shared with others."

TUCKER CARLSON
co-host, The Spin Room (CNN)

Flashman and the Tiger,
by George MacDonald Fraser (Knopf).
"How good is the series? My wife and I came a glass of wine away from naming our son Flashman."





SUSIE HILFIGER
owner/children's designer, Best & Co., Greenwich, Connecticut

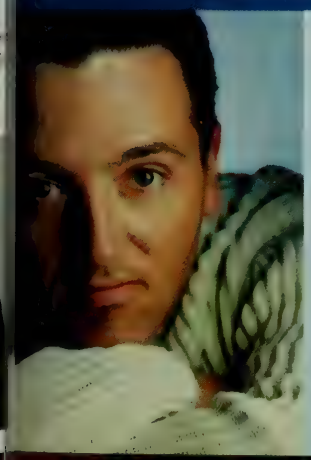
A Simple Path,
by Mother Teresa with Lucinda Vardey (Ballantine).
"A beautiful, simple message from one of the most inspiring women of our time."

ANDY SPADE
C.E.O., Jack Spade

Julius Knipl, Real Estate Photographer: Stories,
by Ben Katchor (Little, Brown).
"Katchor celebrates the small, alm
forgotten pieces of New York Cit
The adventures of Julius Knipl
are sad, romantic, and funny
at the same time."



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CALL AT WILL
Saturday Night Live star Will Ferrell, smirkless in Venice, California. *Inset,* Ferrell's L.A.-specific Nokia 5160, with (he claims) rarely called speed-dialees Ben Stiller, wife Viveca Paulin, and, *perhaps,* Robert Goulet and Merv Griffin.

SPEED DIAL WILL FERRELL

Will Ferrell is "not a big cell-phone person." He doesn't use his in New York, where he's wrapping up the season on *Saturday Night Live*—a year that's seen Ferrell shine with his devastatingly acute imitation of **George W. Bush.** In fact, the new president himself sent a handwritten note after they met at the *S.N.L.* studios: "I regret we did not have more time . . . " Having packed up his cold cell phone, he's now warming it up in L.A., where he's shooting a new **Kevin Smith** movie while commuting back to New York until the *S.N.L.* season finale in May. Even in L.A., he carries his cell phone mostly so that other people can get ahold of him. "If they can't reach you in Hollywood, it creates mass hysteria—sometimes I turn the phone off to encourage the enigma of Will Ferrell." So who's he not speed-dialing? For one, his wife, **Viveca Paulin,** a freelance art auctioneer at Butterfields who was featured on the onetime Fox special *The Ultimate Auction,* a curious attempt at merging the worlds of Sotheby's, **Geraldo Rivera,** and *Spenser: For Hire.* (**Robert Urich** co-hosted, along with the **Duchess of York.**) "None of the items sold," explains Ferrell, "so they had to do a lot of editing to make it look exciting." The rest of his speed dial is taken up with the usual actor's accoutrements—agent, manager, publicist, and **Ben Stiller,** who is starring in and directing *Zoolander,* a send-up of the fashion industry, with Ferrell taking on the role of an evil designer. Also somewhere on his unused bank of numbers are those for **Robert Goulet** and **Merv Griffin,** says Ferrell, "just so I can check in from time to time." Struggling to find some justification for this column's conceit, *V.F.* digs deep and asks him who he wishes were on his speed dial? That's an easy one. Nearby is a worn-out copy of a New York tabloid with a picture of a pit-stained **Al Gore** boogying the night away at the post-concession-speech party famously orchestrated by one of his closest rock-star friends. "I want **Jon Bon Jovi,**" says Ferrell. And perhaps if he did have Bon Jovi on his speed dial, Will Ferrell would have more reason to use it.—HELEN SCHULMAN

DIVIDED ATTENTIONS

A NATIONAL-CONSCIOUSNESS INDEX



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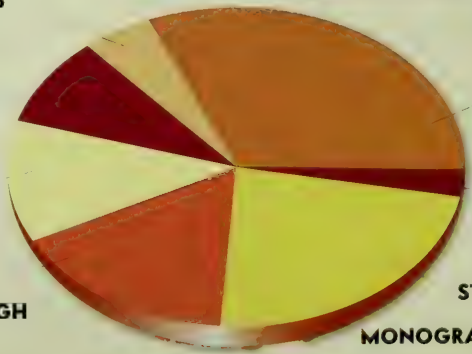


10% PALM SPRINGS

12% MADONNA AND BRITNEY



17% STEVEN SODERBERGH



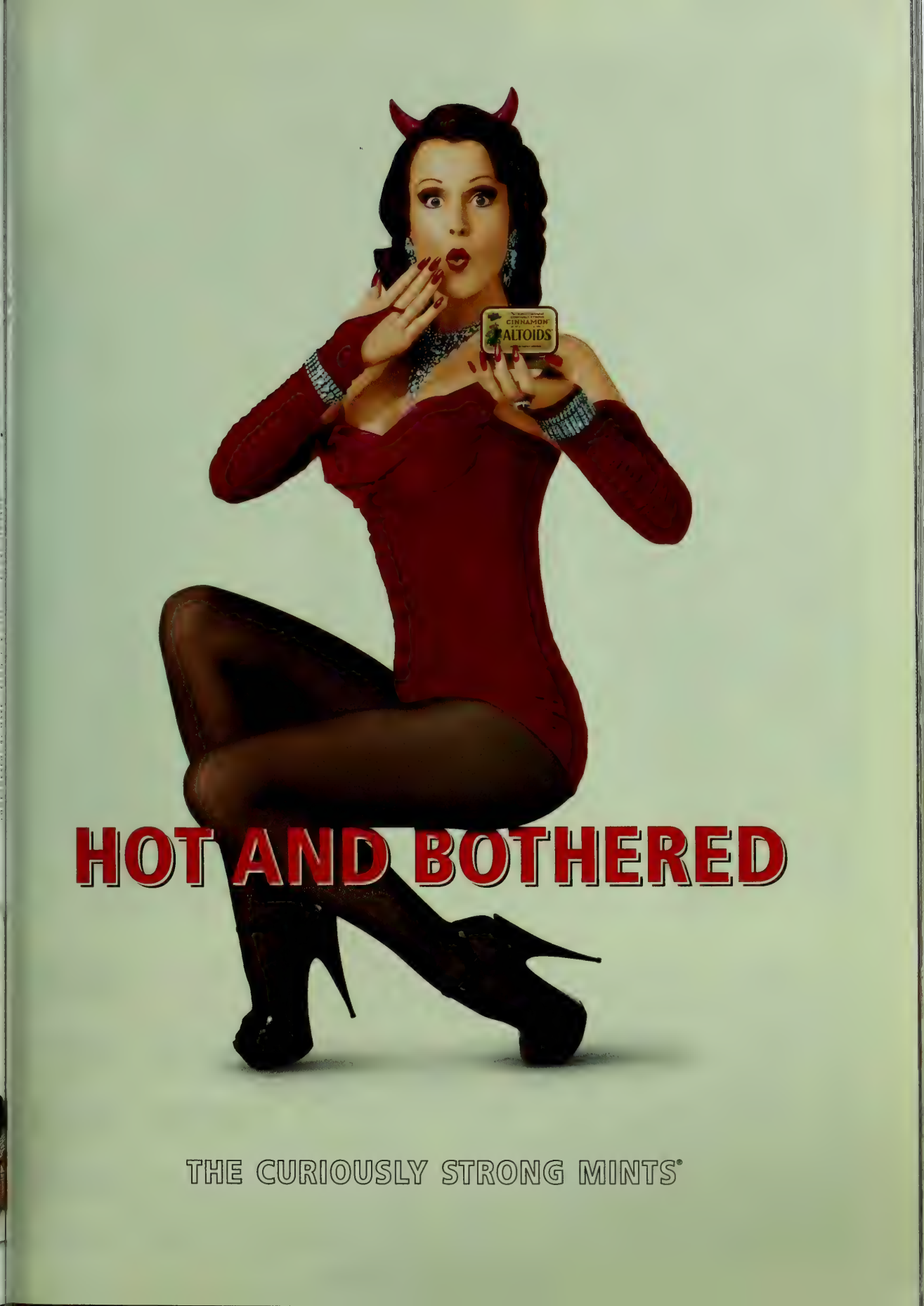


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Love Jones

Nicky Love's rock catharsis

After one horrendous year in which her father, grandfather, and grandmother died, her boyfriend went mad, and a close friend committed suicide, singer **Nicky Love** pulled herself together. In 1993 she left her native Australia for London, where she met **Robbie Robertson**—a founding member of the Band, who had been hired by **David Geffen** and **Mo Ostin** as a sort of talent scout for DreamWorks Records—and played him her songs.

"I saw the possibilities immediately," says Robertson. "She just had a different thing going on—sexuality and a touch of danger—but she wasn't some scruffy street kid. There was a sophistication there." According to Love, who claims she's "naïve *and* jaded," it was crucial that she not be presented as "some fluff in a skirt with dancers behind me. I wanted to do something modern and honest."

Despite her age, 28, her past includes a past. "I used to party quite a lot," she admits. "I was in a band called the Freaked Out Flower Children, but privately we were called 'the Fucked Up Flower Children.' I tried stuff, but it was nothing I wanted to go back to. A lot of people I knew weren't so lucky."

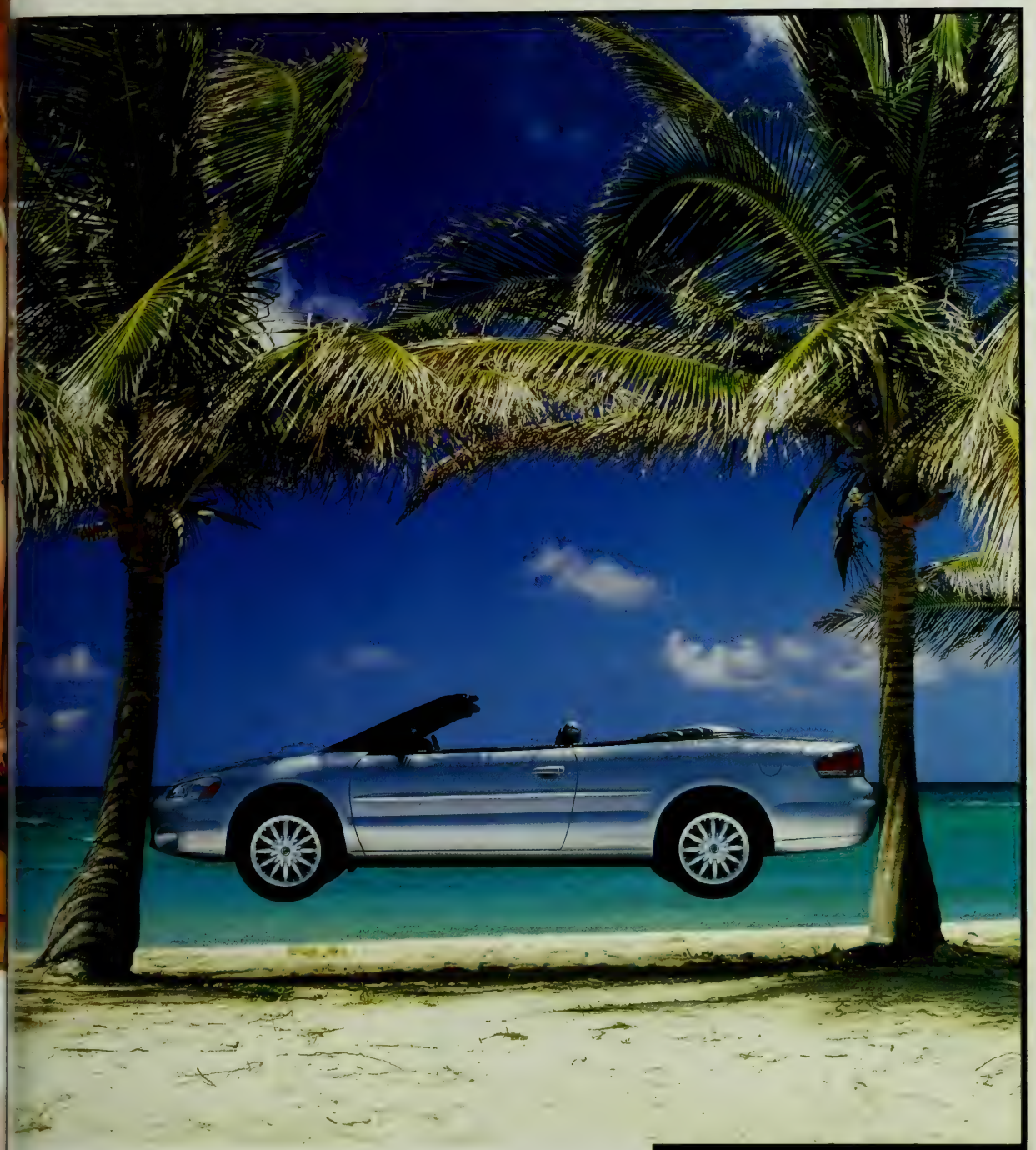
For her debut, *Honeyvision,* out next month, Robertson put her in the studio with groovy U.K. producers, including **Marius de Vries** (**PJ Harvey, Björk, Madonna**). The result: On audio—catchy pop tunes illustrating tales of betrayal, madness, and anger. On video—Love displays one of the best sneers since Jagger or Presley.

Love lives in Spain with her husband, British businessman **James White** (they got married last year in Las Vegas at the Bellagio hotel), but is currently in Los Angeles, preparing for a U.S. tour this spring. "Seeing what a big, bloody business this is in America," she says, "you realize that someone could replace you in a second. You've got to be serious; there's just no room for that old rock 'n' roll mentality." —LISA ROBINSON



LOVE ME TENDER
Singer Nicky Love, photographed at the Marbella Club in Spain.





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Voices from Above

Guided by Voices comes out of isolation

Standing over a giant mixing board at the Greene Street studio in SoHo, late-blooming rock star **Robert Pollard** is wearing a T-shirt from his favorite New York City restaurant—and it ain't the Four Seasons. La Mela, a Little Italy dive that serves tray after tray of food whether you order it or not, somehow suits the 43-year-old Budweiser-drinking ex-schoolteacher from Dayton, Ohio, who sings like a Beatle and talks like a truckdriver. Pollard has been churning out addictively catchy pop songs on album after album since 1986, a year after he started Guided by Voices with a bunch of his Dayton drinking buddies.

The 1994 lo-fi LP *Bee Thousand* (and its 1995 follow-up, *Alien Lanes*) turned Pollard and Guided by Voices into indie-rock icons. The loyal-to-vinyl set flipped for G.B.V.'s one- and two-minute masterpieces, with brash and off-kilter performances, gorgeous and occasionally heartbreaking melodies, and lyrics that, with a little help from controlled substances, can inspire impassioned wee-hours arguments.

Playing in the basement had its drawbacks, however. "After we did a few lo-fi records in a row, there were people who said, 'I'm sick of this shit—do something else,'" Pollard says. "Then, when we did something else, some people were like, 'Aww, I like the old, lo-fi stuff better.' But everyone likes to pick on me. I'm the **Charlie Brown** of rock."

After weathering epic personnel changes between 1996 and 1998, the reconstructed Guided by Voices decided to take its music to the masses. "I think anybody in a band that's making records wants to sell jillions of copies," says Pollard. "You want people to hear your music. And then, you know, you get more money. Better-looking girls start coming to your shows. And you get better deli trays."

Producer and ex-Car **Ric Ocasek** tried to clean up the group's sound on 1999's *Do the Collapse,* but die-hard fans found the result a bit too polished. Since then, the famously prolific Pollard has released *Hold on Hope,* an EP with additional songs from the Ocasek sessions; *Speak Kindly of Your Volunteer Fire Department,* a solo album; and *Suitcase,* a boxed set of 100 songs from the past 20 years. "I probably write about 100 songs a year," says Pollard. "There have been a few times when I felt really inspired and wrote skeletons of, like, 50 songs in one sitting, and then went back and picked a whole album's worth to work on."

Pollard hopes that with the help of producer **Rob Schnapf,** whose credits include **Beck's** *Mellow Gold* and **Elliott Smith's** *XO,* the band will strike the right balance between authenticity and accessibility on *Isolation Drills,* G.B.V.'s 12th album. So far, it sounds like the formula is working. "Rob Schnapf is not as intimidating as Ric Ocasek," Pollard enthuses. "And we were allowed to drink on this record. The last one we weren't allowed. Ric did *not* want us to drink." —MICHAEL HOGAN



VOICES OF REASON Robert Pollard, left, and bandmates Tim Tobias, Nate Farley, and Doug Gillard at New York's Greene Street studio.





i know
that i'm very
complicated

i like it that way

VIRGINIA SLIMS

SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Smoking By Pregnant Women May Result in Fetal Injury, Premature Birth, And Low Birth Weight.

VANITY FAIR
MARCH 2001

The Passions of Julianne Moore

Julianne Moore's skill as an actress may have slowed her ascent to stardom: she's disappeared into a dazzling range of characters—including the doomed adulteress in *The End of the Affair*, the coked-up porn star of *Boogie Nights*, and the trophy wife in *Magnolia*. Her life is as hard to categorize as her career. LESLIE BENNETTS gets Moore talking about why she hasn't married the man she loves, the joy of being mother to their three-year-old son, and what it was like to fill Jodie Foster's shoes, opposite Anthony Hopkins's Hannibal Lecter, in the upcoming sequel to *The Silence of the Lambs*



Fierce and uncompromising, Clarice Starling is the quintessential loner, an incorruptible F.B.I. agent battered by the incompetence and betrayal of others, holding fast to her principles no matter what the cost. And the cost is steep indeed—not only the husband and children Hannibal Lecter taunts her for having forfeited, but possibly life and limb (although you'll have to see the movie to understand the true ghoulishness of the limb question).

Yes, Clarice and Hannibal are back. Everybody's favorite fun couple has returned to pick up the story in *Hannibal*, the long-awaited sequel to *The Silence of the Lambs*, which is set 10 years after the diabolical doctor escaped confinement and took off for parts unknown. Anthony Hopkins (now Sir Anthony) returns

PHOTOGRAPHS BY HERB RITTS • STYLED BY L'WREN SCOTT



RED DRAGON

Julianne Moore has capped off a run of fine performances by starring with Anthony Hopkins in *Hannibal*, the brainy sequel to *The Silence of the Lambs*. Photographed at the Academy House in Palm Springs, California, on December 10, 2000.



MOORE-A

Moore admits she struggled wit
violence in *Hannibal*. "I actually t
to my shrink about it," she
"As a parent, as a person—what is
Hannibal is the dark side t
part of everyone.... We are socia
civilized, but in our fantasy
we explore those th
That's O.K., but it's a fin
I feel uncomfortable


"She's a true chameleon,
which is rare," says *Hannibal*
director Ridley Scott.

as Lecter, but this time around Julianne Moore has replaced Jodie Foster as Clarice.

And Moore is convincing indeed—hell-bent on getting her man, blazing with righteous fury all the way, equally believable in a gunfight or in stiletto heels and deep décolletage (formal attire apparently being de rigueur for dining on prefrontal lobes sautéed in black-truffle sauce). Even her nemesis approves: "I thought she was fabulous," says Hopkins. "It was a tall order, going in and taking over this part, and she did it beautifully."

Julianne Moore might initially have seemed an odd choice as the emotionally stunted Clarice. With her toddler visiting the *Hannibal* set (although only when Mommy was shooting the odd scene that wouldn't damage a tender young psyche) and her boyfriend, a handsome young director named Bart Freundlich, playing Mr. Mom, Moore has visibly built a far more rewarding domestic life than that of the isolated Clarice. And Moore's propensity for disrobing to steam up the screen in torrid sex scenes hardly suggests a repressed F.B.I. agent with zero love life. Indeed, playing carnal passion has always seemed Moore's strong suit.

But no single role can begin to suggest her range. In the last couple of years Moore, who just turned 40, has become one of the hottest actresses in the business, with a dazzling run of work to show for it. Her breathtaking performance as the luminous, doomed wife who has an adulterous relationship with Ralph Fiennes in *The End of the Affair* earned Moore a well-deserved Academy Award nomination for best actress. From the coked-up porn star Amber Waves, brokenhearted at the loss of her child in *Boogie Nights* (which also earned Moore an Oscar nomination), to the overwrought trophy wife in *Magnolia,* from the indolently seductive Yelena in *Vanya on 42nd Street* to the raging sister Mia in Freundlich's *The Myth of Fingerprints* to the scheming Mrs. Cheveley in Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband,* Moore has compiled a list of credits that has directors scrambling to book her.

She seems to be able to do anything, from small indie films such as *Safe,* in which she played the ailing suburban housewife who is allergic to the modern world, to big Hollywood movies such as *The Lost World: Jurassic Park,* in which she played Jeff Goldblum's paleontologist girlfriend, and *Nine Months,* in which she was Hugh Grant's pregnant girlfriend. Appearing topless in *Body of Evidence* and bottomless in *Short Cuts,* Moore is a director's delight, game for anything a scene demands.

When Todd Haynes, who wrote and directed *Safe,* first saw her for the part, he says, "She completely floored me. It was an incredibly difficult character, elusive and fragile and sort of a nonentity, but when Julianne did it the character was embodied in front of me in a singular, defining moment, rather than in a cumulative process where you work on it over a period of time. That's an amazing feeling for a writer; it's the only time that's ever happened to me."

Not bad for a woman who got her start in a soap opera (playing good and evil twins on *As the World Turns*) but was told that she shouldn't be too hopeful about a career because redheads were hard to cast.

Despite her flowing auburn hair and a face that belongs in a Pre-Raphaelite painting, Moore has proved to be the kind of actress who can disappear into virtually any character. "Her ability to take over a role has slowed down her progress as a movie star," says Freundlich, "because she doesn't lend her persona to the part. She just inhabits the character, and that's not what being a movie star is about."

But it is what great performances are about, and it's a maj reason why insiders are calling Moore "the next Meryl."

"She's a true chameleon, which is rare," says Ridley Sco who directed *Hannibal.* "Not a lot of actors have the caliber make things so different. She's very inventive, and I always li to be surprised. Right now it's quite a competitive field for tresses of her generation and younger; there are a lot of go gals out there. But when we were casting *Hannibal,* she was ways foremost for me. When I mentioned her to Tony he sa 'Oh, jolly good!' Although the studios wanted to discuss oth names, I believe casting is everything, and I thought, It has be Julianne and that's it."

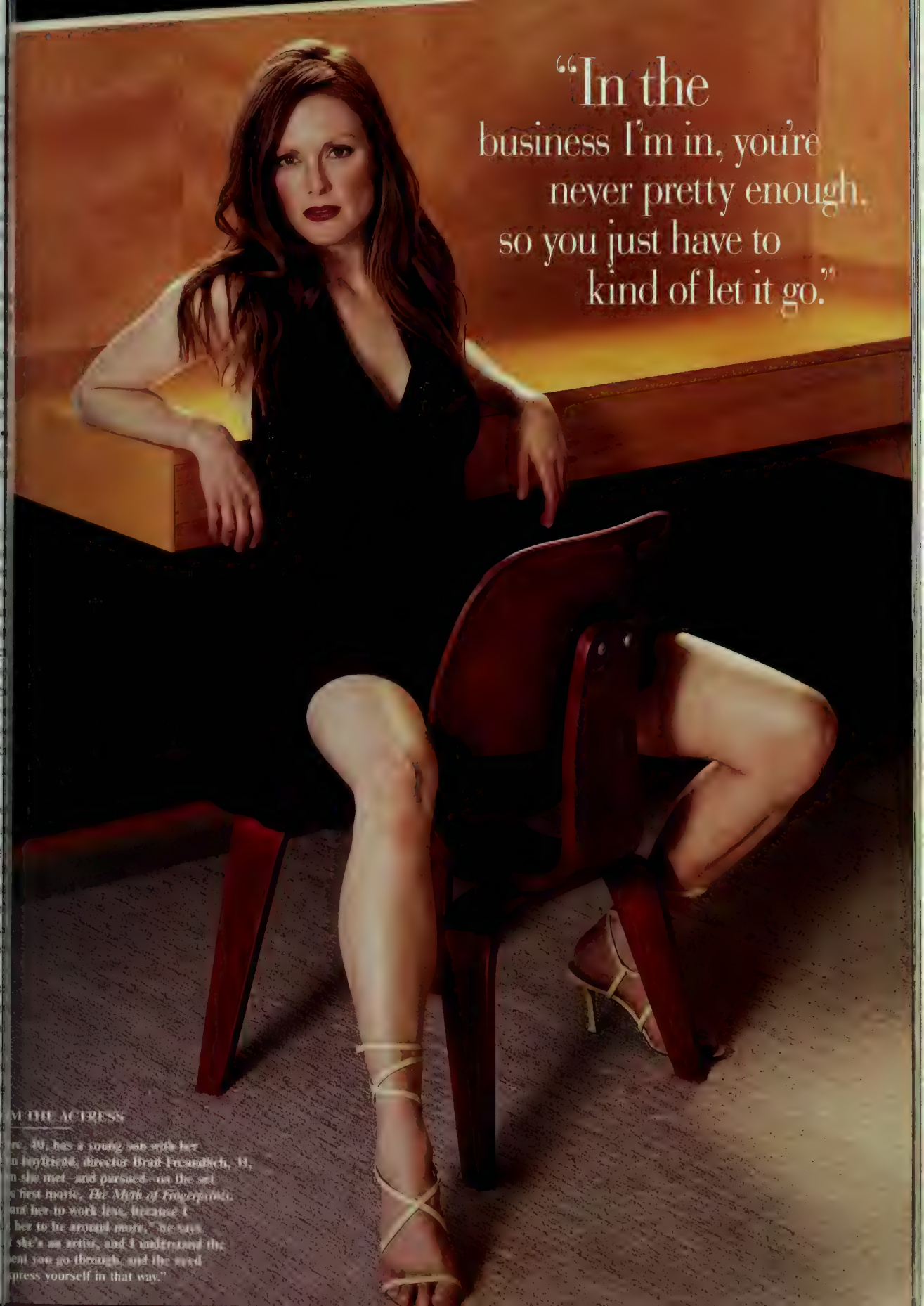
The other names being bandied about ranged from Gwyne Paltrow and Angelina Jolie to Gillian Anderson and Ash Judd. And since Jodie Foster won an Oscar for *The Silence the Lambs,* stepping into her shoes would have been daunti under any circumstances. "She set a very high standard," a mits Moore. "She was wonderful, and that makes you nervo It's also difficult because the character is very internal. She n er says, 'I feel sad,' or 'conflicted,' or 'frustrated.' It's all co pletely internalized. She's an orphan, a woman with no fam who's comfortable only in an institutionalized environment. S has the F.B.I., but then she hits the glass ceiling."

The challenge was compounded by t over-the-top gruesomeness of *Hannib* Foster reportedly declined to reprise h role as Clarice because she found t sequel too lurid, even by Lecterian sta dards. The major sticking point was a parently the controversial dénoueme of Thomas Harris's book, which m be the most bizarre happy ending in t history of popular fiction (assuming y define "happy" as the conventional b gets-girl-and-they-live-blissfully-ever-aft although the horrific version served up by *Hannibal* is about far from conventional as it could get). But that resolution completely out of character for Clarice, none of whose previo actions have suggested a taste for human flesh—or for Dr. Lect

"The ending was a very touchy question, so the first thin did was call Tom Harris," Scott reports. "I said I didn't qu believe it. Suddenly it was this quantum leap from this char ter I thought was incorruptible and unchangeable. It could be. Those qualities were the thing that made her the most f cinating to Hannibal. If she'd have said yes to him, he'd ha killed her."

Harris agreed to the plot changes, and according to Moo no story alterations were made at her behest. "The script I g was the script we made," says the actress, who received $2 m lion for taking on the role (one-tenth of what Foster would ha cost the production). "I read it and thought, This is really da But I thought the script was really solid and very interesti My apprehensions had to do with the nature of the violence am pretty careful about violence, but eventually I came to f that this story was fable-like. This is a film about good and e coming up against each other. It's iconic and almost mytho gized. But it is psychologically horrifying."

She sighs; coming to terms with this issue was not an ea process, and she still hasn't fully made peace with it. "I actu ly talked to my shrink about it. As a CONTINUED ON PAGE



M THE ACTRESS

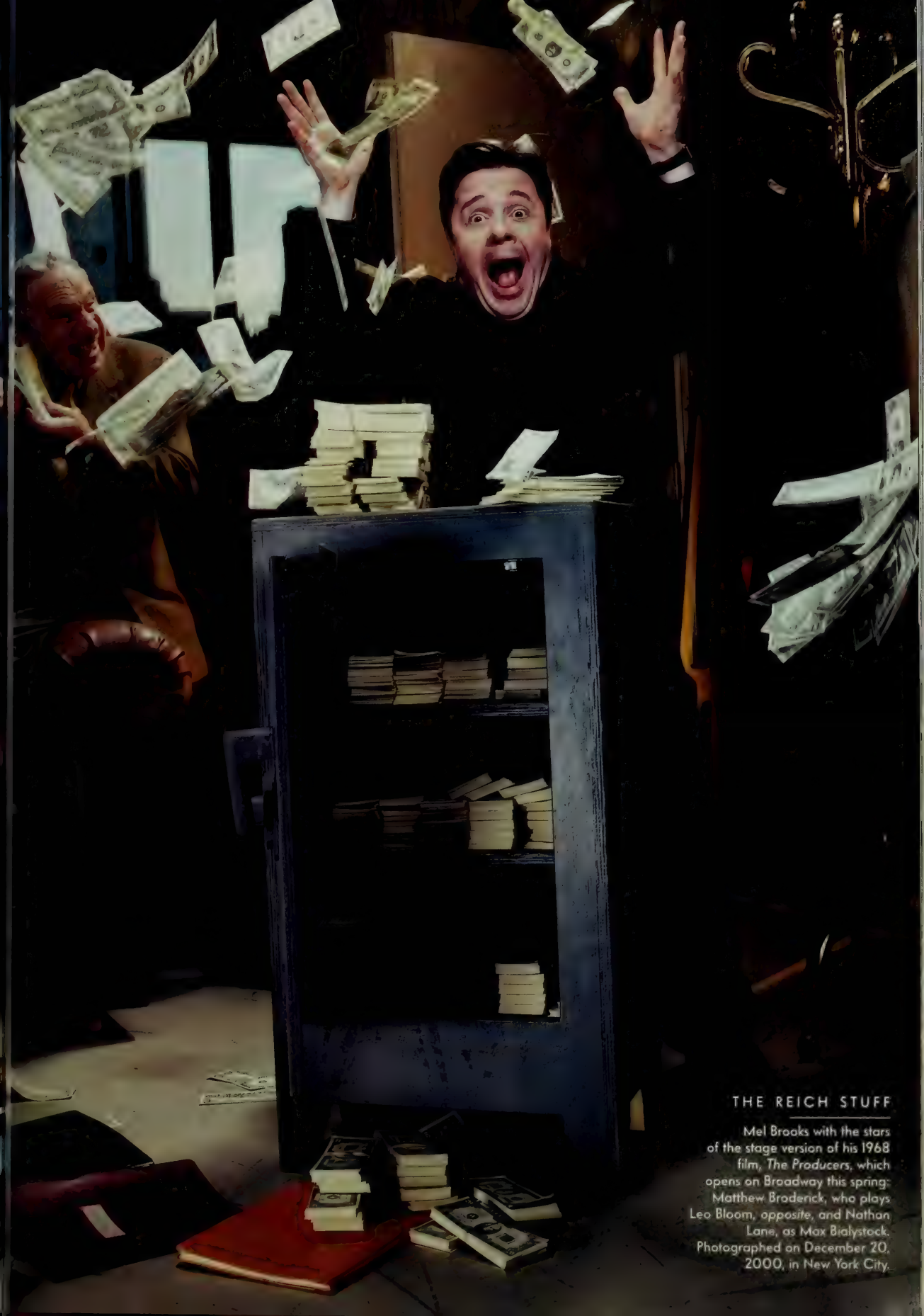
re, 39, has a young son with her
n boyfriend, director Brad Grunfeld, 38,
n she met—and pursued—on the set
s first movie, *The Myth of Fingerprints*,
and her to work less, because I
her to be around more," he says.
she's an artist, and I understand the
ent you go through, and the need
press yourself in that way."

SPRINGTIME FOR BROADWAY



Like *Saturday Night Fever* and *Caddyshack*, Mel Brooks's comedy *The Producers* (1968)—a cheerful landmark in bad taste—is a film whose gauche blemishes mercifully recede, leaving behind its fabulous set pieces and lead performances. Was there ever an unlikelier pair of scam artists than the ones portrayed by Zero Mostel and Gene Wilder? Scheming to fleece investors by staging a surefire flop called *Springtime for Hitler*, Mostel, an anarchic butterball with the dank forehead of a dirty-bookstore customer, and Wilder, an infantile neurotic whose crinkly hair was a cry for help, were a Stage Deli Laurel and Hardy. Also achieving camp status: Dick Shawn as a demented hipster, his Hitler audition an acid trip set to song. Reviving *The Producers* is a gamble (can its low-rent humor survive Broadway sparkle?), but the talent involved in this adaptation, which premieres April 19 at the St. James Theatre, is thick with Tony Award winners (including its stars, Nathan Lane and Matthew Broderick, director Susan Stroman, and co-writer Thomas Meehan), and the laughter of the show's presiding spirit, Mel Brooks, still rings to the rafters, like a cosmic cheering section. So go already! —JAMES WOLCOTT

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL O'NEILL



THE REICH STUFF

Mel Brooks with the stars of the stage version of his 1968 film, *The Producers*, which opens on Broadway this spring: Matthew Broderick, who plays Leo Bloom, *opposite*, and Nathan Lane, as Max Bialystock. Photographed on December 20, 2000, in New York City.

Heiress to the vast Johnson & Johnson fortune, Libet Johnson is one of the wealthiest women in America—and one of the least known, considering her recent multimillion-dollar New York real-estate maneuverings and a romantic history that includes five husbands, a slew of sexy, younger boyfriends, and her current *amour,* high-society hairdresser Frédéric Fekkai. From Johnson's tragic, dysfunctional family background to the latest buzz, SUZANNA ANDREWS cracks the wall of silence surrounding the petite, 50-year-old blonde, whose life of private jets, chartered yachts, and costume balls evokes the girls-just-want-to-have-fun era of Barbara Hutton and Doris Duke



The Heiress and



HAIR TODAY

Libet Johnson and Frédéric Fekkai at New York's Guggenheim Museum, November 21, 2000. "Fekkai is the most stable and probably the most shrewd" of Johnson's men, says a friend.

the Hairdresser

Last November several newspapers in New York reported that Libet Johnson had put her massive 20,000-square-foot triplex in the luxury Trump International Hotel and Tower on the market for $62.3 million, the highest price ever asked for an apartment in Manhattan. Later that month, it was also reported that Johnson was bidding on six Upper East Side town houses owned by the Lycée Français—some of the finest mansions in New York—and that the asking price was $100 million. New Yorkers also learned that the 50-year-old Libet Johnson's real-estate maneuverings were taking place at the urging of her boyfriend, the society hairdresser Frédéric Fekkai, 42, who wanted to live in smaller and cozier surroundings. The couple, it was said, planned to occupy only the most fabulous of the town houses and to sell the rest. This sudden flurry of Libet Johnson stories in the press was greeted by most New Yorkers with no small amount of mystification. Very few people had ever heard of her, and fewer still knew that she was wealthy enough to have $100 million to throw around. As for the news that she was living with her hairdresser, a man eight years younger, well, now . . . hmmmmmm.

That Libet Johnson was in the news was in itself news. An heiress to the vast Johnson & Johnson fortune—her wealth is said to equal that of her older brother Robert Wood Johnson IV, who last year bought the New York Jets for $635 million—she is not only one of the richest women in America, but also among the most elusive. Through the years, she has gone to great lengths to keep her name out of the press. There is no record in the society pages of any major newspaper, for example, of her social debut, and no announcements of any of her five marriages. One would also be hard-pressed to find public mention of any charitable work or donations. For years now, Johnson has forbidden her friends to ever, *ever* talk to the press about her. And only the bravest among them have dared to cross her. "She is a *very* private person," one of them says. Johnson's name wasn't mentioned even in the 80s, when her family feuded bitterly and publicly in court over the estate of her great-uncle, Seward Johnson, who left most of the remaining $400 million of his fortune to the now famous Basia Johnson, the Polish chambermaid who became his third wife. Somehow, Libet managed to stay out of the raft of magazine articles and books that chronicled the family's conflict, its jaw-dropping wealth, and its dysfunctional behavior, which includes an attempted bombing, a shooting, drug problems, and extramarital affairs.

Which is not to say that Libet Johnson is more *boring* than the rest of her family. Indeed, in New York society, in Vail, where she owns a magnificent ski home, and in the wealthy, horsey enclave of Millbrook, New York, where she has an enormous estate with its own landing strip, she is considered a lot *more* interesting than the rest of her family. "She's wild and she's fun," says a socially prominent man who knows her. "She lives so well, I can't *tell* you," says a friend. "She charters boats and gives her friends rides on her private jet." Her Halloween costume ball, which she throws in Millbrook, is renowned. Society women spend weeks planning their outfits. "It's over the top and really fun," says one friend. The servants are all in costumes, the house—"a large, white mansion, the kind where the right half of Edith Wharton's characters live," as it is described by a person who has been there—is lit by candles, and at the back, down a long corridor, is a tent done as a haunted house.

"When you have that kind of money, there are no rules," says a financier who knows Libet Johnson. "She spends a *fortune,*" says another friend. "They say she's got to be careful."

"Libet's out to have a good time," says an acquaintance. "She's not a *serious* person."

Petite, blonde, spirited, "childlike, and very sweet," as one social observer describes her, Johnson is one of that intriguing and possibly dying breed, the Great American Heiress. "Look at the other women like her: Barbara Hutton, Doris Duke, Josephine Abercrombie. Today she has no peer," says a man who knew all these women. Even if she is less tragic than Hutton, who died alone and nearly penniless, or less accomplished than Duke, who studied jazz piano and dance and amassed an impressive art collection, Johnson is one [illegible] their ilk—a woman, independently wealth[y] on a staggering scale, who owes her statio[n] to no man and who does as she pleases.

"She's very social and fashionable a[nd] lives like she's much younger than she is," says a relative of Johnson's. "She has a different lifestyle from a lot of people in o[ur] family." Today the majority of the Johnson clan live quietly, in Wasp-dowdy style, mainly in small towns, tending their horse farms and foundations, and dabbling in art or in small business ventures. The only Johnsons who are as social as Libet are "Woody," who in addition to owning the Jets also heads the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation and is a major donor to the Republican Party, his wife, Sale, and their daughter, Casey, who, at 21, is considered one of Manhattan's leading young socialites.

"Libet *is* Barbara Hutton–like—a lot of ups and downs in her life, a lot of husbands," says a friend. "It is the quintessential story of the heiress who doesn't have a foundation in terms of her sense of self."

"She is a wonderful, generous, very kind person," says a close friend. "And she's an easy target, because of her name, her affluence, the way she lives."

"It was much talked about when she ran off with the driver from the Ritz in Paris," says a New York socialite, "although I never met the creature." He was gorgeous, according to someone CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



PROFITABLE RELATIONS

Above, Johnson in 1996. *Right,* her grandfather Robert Wood Johnson and his third wife, Evelyne, 1943.

WELL GROOMED

Fekkai and Johnson at a New York City Ballet gala, May 2000. People are betting he will become her sixth husband.

"[With] that kind of money, there are no rules."



...And God Created Pam



FEAST YOUR EYES, MORTALS

Pamela Anderson and Marcus Schenkenberg, photographed on the beach in Malibu, December 22, 2000.



Pamela Anderson lives by trial and error. She tends to revisit her big decisions until she gets them right. In 1989 she had her breasts enlarged. In 1999 she had them unenlarged. In 1998 she divorced her rock-star husband, drummer Tommy Lee of Mötley Crüe, after he allegedly assaulted her. In 1999 she reconciled with Lee, but just last year split from him again. Or take the name she gave her second child, Dylan Jagger—itself a small case study in having something both ways. Anderson's own name has tended to oscillate, too. Sometimes it's Pam, at other times it's Pamela, and sometimes there's a man's name after the Anderson, though never for very long. Finally, there's her television career. After leaving *Baywatch* in 1996, she re-appeared in 1998 as a producer and star of *V.I.P.*, another campy syndicated drama set in Southern California, in which she plays not a lifeguard but a bodyguard.

Has the former *Playboy* centerfold, who got her first break at a Canadian football game when a roving scoreboard camera captured her bouncing and beaming in the stands, in fact discovered an image-reinvention strategy of such subtlety and cunning that even Madonna somehow missed it? Anderson's latest big decision is her romance with His Flawlessness, Marcus Schenkenberg, the Swedish model. They're quite an attractive couple, two pinup paragons, and if they put out a calendar (please do!) it's sure to be a best-seller with both sexes and most of the known persuasions in between. There have been rumors of wedding bells—have they set a date? Not yet, but soon, perhaps. The larger question is will she take his name, and, if so, how often and for how long? Adding and subtracting Lee was easy. Schenkenberg, however . . . It's a commitment. —WALTER KIRN

PHOTOGRAPH BY HERB RITTS

Wildly controversial 80s art star Jeff Koons is emerging from a seven-year hell that left him nearly bankrupt and divorced from the Italian porn star turned politician known as La Cicciolina, with whom he is warring for custody of their son. But the very qualities that sank him—obsessive perfectionism combined with a sexualized evocation of his milk-and-cookies childhood—gave Koons iconography its lasting visceral power, winning him staggering prices at auction. From his 1986 *Rabbit*, through the graphically erotic expressions of his marriage and the world-famous flower *Puppy*, to his long-awaited "Celebration" project, INGRID SISCHY explores the tightly entwined work and life of a generation's most misunderstood artist



Koons, High and Low

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TODD EBERLE



NOW LIGHTER AND CRUNCHIER!

Jeff Koons, photographed at his home on the Upper East Side of Manhattan on December 6, 2000. The painting behind him is by his eight-year-old son, Ludwig, who currently lives in Italy.

Play-Doh, 1995–pr
(oil on canvas, 10 ft. 11 in. by 9 ft. 3
from a private collection; pa
the "Celebration" series. These w
can look as if the whole hi
of Abstract Expressionism had
crashing into Po

It was a recent winter evening in New York, and the artist Jeff Koons was overseeing the completion of one of his new paintings, *Cheeky*. With its grilled-cheese sandwich and flying bikini, the work is an eccentric marriage of Surrealism and Pop art. Koons's eyes never left what his assistants were doing on *Cheeky* for very long as they fine-tuned certain parts of the work, sharpening details. Every once in a while, his face a complete deadpan, he ever so politely corrected them—it was as if they were medical residents assisting him at an operation. But considering that they were trying to intensify the deliciously melted look of the grilled-cheese sandwich, the solemnity of the enterprise would have definitely made some people shake their heads at the crazy art world. Another thing that might have startled people was where all this was going on. We weren't in the artist's studio, but at his New York gallery, the dealer Ileana Sonnabend's new place in Chelsea. The picture had already been up on the wall for almost a week!

If one has to ask, How can he still be working on a piece that has left the studio and is considered finished enough to be on view?, then one doesn't know Koons. He calls it "tweaking," and over the years he has tweaked his work in nearly every important museum in the world. His notorious perfectionism is a key to what has made his life as an artist so theatrical, and his art so powerful. It has also meant that some of his work has taken years to complete, and it has led some people to call him impossible. In fact, Koons's belief in the importance of not letting his audience down, of showing nothing but flawless art, has on a number of occasions virtually bankrupted him.

But on the winter night when the finishing touches were being administered to *Cheeky*, the mood was very up. After a biblical-seeming period encompassing seven years of artistic struggle, coupled with a personal saga of familial, legal, and financial hell, Koons, 46, one of the most successful and controversial artists of the 1980s, is once again on a major career roll. He has finally begun to exhibit some pieces of "Celebration," the technically daunting sculpture-and-painting project that he began in 1993 and that so often looked like a Sisyphean task. Furthermore, in the last two years he's begun, finished, and exhibited a number of new bodies of work, and after a long and unhappy split, he is back at the Sonnabend Gallery, where he began his career. Meanwhile, his prices at auction have been impressive—his 1988 porcelain sculpture *Pink Panther* sold for $1.8 million at Christie's last year, a record for the artist. At the end of March he'll unveil yet another body of work at a much anticipated show at the dealer Larry Gagosian's Los Angeles gallery. All in all, not bad for a guy whose career obituary was being written just a couple of years ago.

But not everything has turned around in Koons's life. He is entangled in various lawsuits over his finances, including one with some of his ex-lawyers, and he is still fighting to enforce his custody rights to his eight-year-old son, Ludwig, which were awarded him by American courts in 1994. That decision went the way of the wild, however, because Ludwig's mother and Koons's ex-wife, Ilona Staller, had already taken the baby to Italy, where she lives. The story of what's gone on between Koons and Staller makes the fights between Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier or the marriages of Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton pale in comparison. This is drama with a capital *D*. It is also deliriously nutty. The ex–Mrs. Koons has her own claim to fame: one of the most popular international pornography stars of all time, Staller, 48, who also goes by the name of La Cicciolina, stunned the world in 1987 when she won a seat in the Italian parliament, which she held for five years as a member of the Radical Party. (Her friendly campaigns, which included a nude ride through Rome on top of a horse, make our own recent election look substantive.) She and Koons met in 1989, and their head-spinning union produced not only Ludwig but some of the most talked-about and controversial artworks of the 20th century. The relationship itself was so out there that many people thought it was a publicity stunt. If only life, or Koons, were that simple.

Ed Paschke, the Chicago-based painter who mentored Koons during his college years, tells a story about Koons that suggests how singular his devotion to art was even during his student days: "On one occasion Jeff was assisting me in my studio as I was preparing for a show that was

going to Paris. There were a bunch of r
large paintings that he was stretching
me. I didn't have canvas pliers, so he w
doing it by hand. I noticed that he was
veloping blisters on the tips of his finge
so I said, 'Jeff, you know, maybe we shou
stop that and do something else becau
you're going to hurt yourself.' He answere
'No, I'm determined to finish this and do
right.' He continued and the blisters bro
and the tips of his fingers were bleedi
So there's a Jeff Koons stigmata on t
edge of one of these canvases."

The story captures Koo
perfectly—a man who w
literally bleed for a
(though he himself does
actually paint or sculpt
draw anymore; like ma
contemporary artists, h
more an *auteur* in the c
ematic sense of directing a complex c
laborative enterprise). There are very f
artists who will push themselves and th
work to the edge the way he does, and ev
though his personality can come across
flat in the way of a mechanized figu
Koons is actually quite theatrical; along t
way—with a little bit of help from a f
artistic forebears such as Salvador Dalí a
Andy Warhol—Koons invented a perso
for himself as a kind of art salesman, m
chievous yet also achingly sincere. By n
he's become that persona so complete
that one can't tell where it begins and t
original Jeff ends. The total package, J
Koons, is like a great American charac
one might find in a book by Walker Pe
or James Thurber or Sinclair Lewis, but
dated. When I was talking to the desig
Helmut Lang about Koons, Lang said, "
as though he's the son of Pee-wee Hern
and Lucille Ball." That's close.

Koons has always reminded me of D
rin Stephens, the very courteous husba
in the 60s TV show *Bewitched*. They ha
the same clean-cut appearance and an
want to be liked" aura. Koons isn't litera
in advertising, as Darrin was, but in a we
way he's in a related business—selling t
beauty of vacuum cleaners, for instan
in the sculptural works that first won h
notoriety in the early 80s. But where Dar
had to count on the women in his fam
when a touch of magic was required


The story captures Koons perfectly—
a man who will literally bleed for art.



"The Surrealists tried to be shocking," says a



Lips, 2000 (oil on canvas, 10 ft. by 14 ft.); part of the "Easyfun—Ethereal" series. Packed with energy and wit, these paintings are full of the sexual undercurrent that Koons likes to layer in his work.

istorian David Sylvester. "Koons really *is* shocking."

make things better, Koons, whose own wife proved less accommodating, is an expert at casting his own spells.

Part of the magic of Koons's art is the way he melds high and low and keeps the work feeling so alive. He may spend years developing his projects, but by the end you'd never know it, because for all his intensity over the finish of his art, Koons is a master of the light touch. And yet, there's always more with him than meets the eye. The artist's work is packed with an art-historical consciousness, and critics and historians have linked it to Surrealism, Hyperrealism, Pop, Minimalism—you name it, it's all in there—but the results are never didactic or academic. They're as accessible as products in a supermarket. Take his "Celebration" painting *Play-Doh:* it looks as if the whole history of Abstract Expressionism came crashing into Pop art. Think of Willem de Kooning and James Rosenquist producing an heir and you've got it, but you've also got a work that communicates to everybody—a painting, after all, of Play-Doh. Or how about a massive sculpture of a kitten peeking out of a sock? If the imagery sounds obvious, that's part of the point with Koons. He doesn't have the ambivalence, or the cynicism, that comes with postmodern thinking. What he does have is a need to make things that can connect to other people. Like Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein, whom he credits as major inspirations, he has completely integrated the American idea of democracy into his art. To Koons, everything and everyone is worthy of art. His work is the successful result of the more idealistic movements of 20th-century art—he actually *has* made art for everyone. Once, in his brasher days, he said, "I've made what the Beatles would have made if they had made sculpture. Nobody ever said that the Beatles' music was not on a high level, but it appealed to a mass audience. That's what I want to do." The truth is, I've never seen an artist who wanted to reach the general public more than Koons does. This has made him the most popular artist of his generation. It has also made him the most misunderstood.

Jeff Koons was born in 1955 in York, Pennsylvania, an industrial town with a population of some 60,000. During one of the many talks that we had for this article he told me, "My life experience has been through my art." The reverse is also true: through Koons's art one can witness the story of his life. In his telling, his childhood sounds like the living incarnation of a TV version



"Something about that degr



POP GO THE EASELS

Koons, photographed in his SoHo studio, October 18, 2000. His assistants are putting last-minute touches on the "Easyfun—Ethereal" series. For a long stretch of the 90s, Koons had a hard time finishing work—more than one critic called him the Orson Welles of art.

f perfectionism goes beyond anything necessary."

of a stereotypical all-American, whiter-than-white family of the 1950s and early 60s. His father, Henry Koons, owned a furniture store and also did some interior decorating for the local swells; his mom, Gloria, was always waiting with cookies and milk when Jeff and his sister, Karen, came home from school. When Jeff was five they moved to Dover, a suburb right outside York, where they had found a bigger, better home, a Georgian colonial. By then Koons had already started to act the part of the little artist. There's a portrait of him in which he is proudly sitting with a box of Ethelbert crayons. Apart from the fact that Koons is just a tot, the picture looks remarkably like those photos of budding industrialists from the period that one would find in *Fortune* magazine. Koons has the same scrubbed look, the same haircut, the same cock of his head as he looks directly at the camera that these on-their-way-up-the-ladder businessmen had. But instead of a cigar he's holding a crayon, and instead of a suit he's wearing a flowered shirt that seems very Pop today. The artist used the photograph in an artwork 20 years later, titling it *The New Jeff Koons*—that's how telling it is. In the picture, he already had a version of what would become his signature look—part Frankie Avalon, part Elvis Presley, part pleased-to-meet-ya Rotarian.

In Koons's recollections of his early life, there are no tantrums, no pot scandals, no deep traumas. There were family outings to amusement parks—not to museums—and visits to his grandmother who lived nearby. He still speaks fondly of the saltine crackers with jam that she'd dole out to him and his sister—not quite your Proustian madeleine, but it is the kind of imagery that Koons loves to put in his art these days. In 10th grade, he fell for Shelly Myers, a straight-A student who encouraged Jeff's artistic ambitions, and who still bakes him an occasional pumpkin pie. It can all sound too good to be true, not at all like the torment artists often describe when they talk about growing up. Koons has said, "My life was innocent and beautiful," and, whether or not the reality was that uncomplicated, one can feel in much of his art a drive to capture those feelings.

This was not a situation where, when the kid said he wanted to be an artist, the parents broke out the smelling salts. On the contrary, they'd been encouraging him with lessons since he was five—and, as if conscious of the historical importance that his art would eventually have, they'd also saved almost CONTINUED ON PAGE 270

FLOWER POWER

***Tulips*, 1995–98 (oil on canvas, 9 ft. 3 in. by 10 ft. 10 in.), from the collection of Dakis Joannou, Athens, Greece; part of the "Celebration" series. If the imagery seems obvious, that's part of the point with Koons.**



"I've made what the Beatl



ould have made if they had made sculpture."

Dear Dame Edna...

Dame Edna Everage has millions of devoted fans who flock to her shows, worship at her feet, and, apparently, seek her advice on their knottiest private problems. During her Royal Tour of the United States, the Australian mega-star shares a few letters from her American "Possums"—along with her wise and nurturing answers.



Dear Vanity Fair *Possums,*

I am not a brilliant woman or even a university graduate, though I am loaded with honorary degrees. The spooky thing is that the world and his wife are always asking for my advice on practically everything. I suppose I have a kind of native wisdom inherited from my Australian ancestors. When people ask me questions, my genes give the answers, and they are usually right on the money!

Since I've been touring North America in my brilliant Tony Award–winning, one-woman, hands-on, in-your-face show, the letters have come flooding in. Some are tragic, some a tad embarrassing, a few even incomprehensible, but all are heartfelt cries for help. What a selfish megastar I would be to ignore the private anguish of the American people, especially since I have so much to share. This upscale journal has given me an opportunity to give back just a little of the nurturing I have received from my Possums across the pond. I want you to know that I am always here for you, supportive and empowering.

Now, fire away!

Dear Dame Edna,

My wife, Anthea, has become infatuated with Gore Vidal. I have often pointed out that Mr. Vidal would not be in the least interested in her (she is a very silly woman, though dear in her own way). This doesn't deter her. She travels the world's literary festivals in the hope of glimpsing her "amour." I am worried that she will become more obsessed and end up stalking Mr. Vidal. Have you any advice?

Desperate of Los Angeles

ILLUSTRATIONS BY HILARY KNIGHT

ar Desperate,

This is a rather embarrassing question · me because the craggy author of Myra eckinridge, Burr, *and* Palimpsest *has al-ys had a warm regard for myself and has n hinted, in his typically shy fashion, at trimony. Of course, a desirable bachelor e Gore is no stranger to stalkers; there are vays a few handsome "heavies" in beige rgo shorts and docksiders lurking in the ckground in case of trouble. Your wife's l has certainly been looking for Miss ght for many years without success, ugh he could have been looking in the ong places. However, your marriage is rfectly safe. I know old Gore well enough feel that he would only be interested in ng the knot with a female high achiever—sophisticated woman with a royal title referably Italian), a private income, a me-track record, bone structure, and a love-speaking voice. Forgive me, Desperate, t I suspect your wife, Anthea, does not swer to any of these descriptions.*

I once knew a woman who was infatuated th Tom Wolfe, and her husband nipped that in bud simply by dressing entirely in white suits, my little old-fashioned striped shirts, and white loras, even though he was six feet four inches l and 375 pounds, with a deviated septum.

Perhaps, without necessarily going the hole hog, you could try to emulate Gore in der to revive your wife's interest in you. You uld practice witty put-downs and satirical gers at family dinners and barbecues.

If you think that's too tall an order and uld cause misery to your loved ones or ork associates, suggest Anthea try Al re and/or Vidal Sassoon instead.

ear Dame Edna,

have never had a multiple orgasm and am beginning to wonder if they are a yth. Can you say whether the multiple orgasm exists? If it does, how would you suggest that I instruct my partner?

Shelley of Rome, Georgia

Dear Shelley,

I happen to know on very good authority that the so-called "multiple orgasm" was invented about 20 years ago by Cosmopolitan *simply in order to sell magazines. Since then, unfortunate featherbrained females with nothing better to do have been anguishing over this foolish concept under the impression that their marriages are somehow incomplete without it.*

What twaddle!

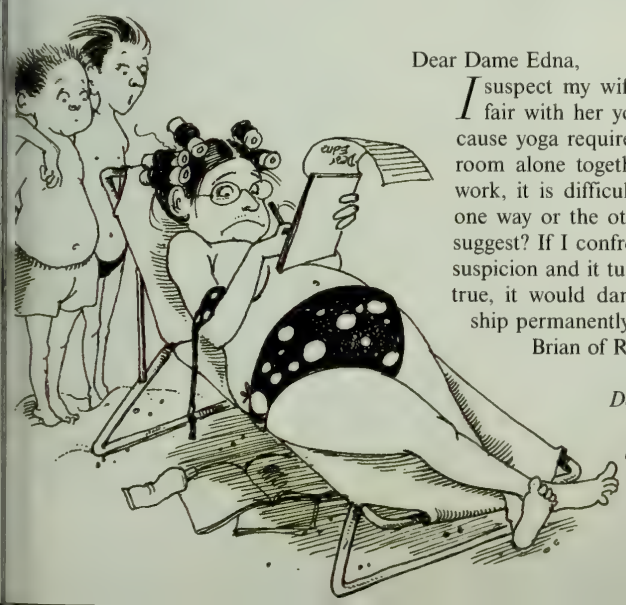
In my day the word "orgasm" was not even in the dictionary, and if anyone accidentally had one they would have been rushed to hospital.

I have always felt that the sexual side of matrimony has been ridiculously overrated, and I'm proud to say my late husband, Norm, tended to agree with me. In those days, nice people were more curious about what religion you were or who you voted for than about what is now called "sexual orientation."

Far from being liberated, today's young brides carry a burden of guilt and anxiety far greater than we did in our day. Those irresponsible glossy magazines for girls, feeding on female insecurity and chronic co-dependency, have invented a smorgasbord of new things that can go badly wrong in the honeymoon suite, and unsavory films haven't helped.

But let's face it, Shelley of Rome, who's counting? The Pope probably doesn't approve anyway.

P.S. Are you a descendant of the gorgeous poet Shelley by the way? If so, from all accounts he never had any problems with the matter in hand.



Dear Dame Edna,

I suspect my wife is having an affair with her yoga instructor. Because yoga requires them to be in a room alone together when I am at work, it is difficult for me to know one way or the other. What do you suggest? If I confronted her with my suspicion and it turned out not to be true, it would damage our relationship permanently.

Brian of Rockville, Maryland

Dear Brian,

I have never really gone in for yoga, though my New Zealand bridesmaid Madge Allsop and I occasionally practice Tae Kwon Do, in which she is invariably the injured party. Few yoga instructors are required to sign the Hippocratic oath, and since they are often in tempting proximity to scantily clad young housewives in provocative leggings, Nature can sometimes take its unacceptable course.

If your wife's yoga classes seem to always occur in the evening and detain her into the wee small hours, it would not be unreasonable to suspect that she is adopting something more than the lotus position.

When she next comes home from her private lesson, tell her you yourself have been studying Swedish massage during her long absences and you would love to give her a caring demonstration. Make sure she suspects nothing, and when she is in her birthday suit gently start with her ankles and see if you can get them to a position just behind her ears. If this proves effortless, you have a problem.



Dear Dame Edna,

A friend has recently inherited a lot of money ($400,000) and has dropped me. After all the years of listening to her problems and paying for meals, I feel hurt and offended that she has gone off to get a classier circle of friends. Dare I confront her? Please advise.

Bella of Boston

Dear Bella,

*If you think $400,000 is a lot of money, all I can say is "*Ciao, *Bella."*

Dame Edna's thought for the month: Don't forget, Possums, there are no strangers in the world, just friends you haven't met yet. □

Letters to Dame Edna should be addressed to her c/o *Vanity Fair,* 4 Times Square, New York, New York 10036.

HEF'S BLONDE PERIOD

Hugh Hefner and his seven girlfriends, clockwise from top left, Karin Lohmann, Tina Jordan, Tiffany Holliday, Cathi O'Malley, Stephanie Heinrich, Regina Lauren, and Buffy Tyler. "Is this the paradise I've been planning on?" Hefner says. "You betcha. But here's the surprise—this is what *they* want." Photographed at Hefner's Playboy Mansion in Holmby Hills, California, on December 18, 2000.



Hugh Hefner

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID LACHAPELLE



Roaring 70s

While Hugh Hefner's friends play cards and discuss their arthritis, the founder of *Playboy* is sharing his bed, his tub, and his reign as hip-hop Hollywood's king of retro cool with seven nubile platinum blondes. Can the Viagra-stoked "mack daddy" of the L.A. club scene be the same Hef who a decade ago finally settled down, after a stroke, to domestic bliss? On the eve of Hefner's 75th birthday, with his Mansion a wriggling, giggling mass of matching pink-pajama-clad girlfriends, NANCY JO SALES finds the man, his lifestyle, and the empire he embodied all making a swinging comeback

"She's beautiful . . . "

" . . . wonderful . . . "

"I pick her up at 12 o'clock "

"And they have her swimming and running around—"

"You love her."

"Of course."

Six men in Hugh Hefner's library are talking about the girls they adore.

"And then when I went to Laguna," says Don Adams, "I had to board the dog, so the day camp I send her to says, 'Well, we don't *board* dogs. But we'll make an exception for Sweetie.'"

The other men say, "Aww."

It's Card Night, and before their weekly gin-rummy game, the men are having their weekly meal from the Playboy Mansion's 24-hour kitchen—once advertised as being ready to serve up aphrodisiacs or Baked Alaska, day or night.

This is "Thanksgiving dinner"—some slabs of turkey, mashed potatoes, peas. The men are hunched around a backgammon coffee table, waiting for Hef to appear. His portrait looms; it's from the 70s; he's dressed as Henry VIII.

Hef is upstairs right now.

"Probably in the *tub,*" says Adams, his inflection like Agent 86 on *Get Smart.*

Hef, who turns 75 in April, is sharing his tub these days with seven young women he calls "the girlfriends."

" . . . And for arthritis, you recommend, what?" one of his friends is asking his doctor, Mark "Doc" Saginor.

The girlfriends' names are Tiffany, Stephanie, Cathi, Katie, Buffy, Tina, and Regina; they are 19 to 28 years old.

"You can *die* from the angiogram," Doc is saying, popping a Life Extension Softgel.

"What *is* sciatica?" someone asks.

"*Oh! To be with six blondes in a tub is wonderful!*" Don Adams suddenly sings, over piped-in crooner music (Bing Crosby).

"Don used to be one of the great romantics," says Keith Hefner, Hef's younger brother (he's 73). "But now he calls sex 'the garbage.'"

Hef's last set of girlfriends, "Brande, Sandy, Mandy, and Jessica" (Sandy and Mandy were twins), all moved out of the Mansion as of August 2000. Brande, who went to join the cast of *Baywatch Hawaii,* "was like the fourth leg in the table," Hef said in interviews. "It's the kind of thing where you don't know how much you'll miss something until it's gone . . . "

" . . . *Oh! To be in a tub is wonderful!*" Don Adams sings. "Or so that selfish S.O.B. tells me," he adds.

Two years ago, Hef's second wife, Kimberley Conrad Hefner, packed up and moved with their two young sons to a house next door (the Hefners are still not divorced). They had wed in a "fairy tale" ceremony on the lawn of the Playboy Mansion in 1989, the same year Kimberley became Playmate of the Year; James Caan and Jessica Hahn were there. Hef called Kimberley his "Playmate for a Lifetime."

"I'd been looking for love in all the wrong places," he told reporters.

The men in his library are staring at golf.

"When we first started hanging around with Hefner," says Skip Krask, a doughy former nightclub owner from Chicago, "we used to talk about girls. But then as life went on we talked about illnesses, and now you see we all carry pictures of our dogs."

"We talked about divorces for a while," says Doc.

"Why *should* women get alimony?" Krask asks, annoyed.

"Hey, guess what," says Alan Kent, a white-haired comedian from Chicago. "I'm playing an old geezer in a commercial tomorrow."

"So it's typecasting," says Shelly Kasten, another former Chicago nightclub owner.

They've finished their turkey, and now the butlers—the young guys slinking around in black vests, black pants—have cleared the plates away. There's an old-man silence.

"Hef's a minute late."

"He must be in the tub," says Adams.

"No, he has two more minutes," says Keith Hefner. He once wanted to be an actor. *Playboy* magazine—in which he invested $1,000 of its original $8,000 start-up money in 1953—made him rich.

They're all checking their watches when Hef comes in, humming a tune: "*You always hurt the one you love . . .* "

"Pay no attention to these guys," he says. He laughs his Mr. Magoo laugh. "I've never seen any of them before!"

He's wearing red silk pajamas, a black smoking jacket, black slippers, white socks. He's five feet nine inches, with a long, phallic nose. His jaw is like a suit of armor's.

His speech, which is ever so slightly slurred, sounds like Chicago, and as if he's still got a pipe in his mouth. It was one of the props he used when, as he has said, he re-invented himself, just like the Great Gatsby. He also compares himself to Don Juan and James Bond.

He smells a little of liquor just now; in the evenings he likes to take a drink of Jack Daniel's and Diet Pepsi.

Doc says, "It's pumping!" He's taking Hef's blood pressure, as he does a few nights a week. "One hundred and fifty over 70—I think you'll make it through the card game."

Hef snaps his fingers, as if leading some invisible big band all his own. "This is," he says, "the happiest time of my life"—just as he said it was with Kimberley, and then Brande, Sandy, Mandy, and Jessica.

"What's the *bracha*"—the blessing—"for gin?" asks Kasten.

The men are now sitting three across (two teams at a long card table set up in the screening room—like the rest of the Tudor-style Mansion, it's full of dark wood and portraits of Hef in regal poses. Rabbit knickknacks abound. A bust of Barbi Benton stares from a windowsill; her nipples are like double-A batteries.

Some of the men, including Hef, are squinting behind reading glasses. The butlers bring them glasses of tomato juice and bowls of nuts.

"Jesus Christ, Keith, you can't pick your nose!" says Kent, complaining of cards.

Hef laughs. He sings (he's on the other team), "*Irene, good night.*"

Hef likes to sing; on one of the episodes of *Playboy's Penthouse,* his black-and-white 60s TV show, he ventured a rendition of "Walkin' My Baby Back Home" with a brunette looking on, belladonna-eyed.

"Ooh, *yeeeah.*" He taps his hand on the table when "Take the 'A' Train" comes on.

Don Adams turns to him, impatient. "I gave you a tape, would you *play* it, instead of having to listen to Frank Sinatra hand Dick Haymes the baton?"

Hef looks up. "What do you mean, a audiotape? . . . Not *likely.*"

Everything at the Mansion is done his way, and just so, from the bowls of melon (cantaloupe, honeydew) the butlers are serving now to the matching pink pajamas the girlfriends will all wear in bed with him, later tonight.

The Mansion is run on a schedule of activities, much like summer camp. There's Card Night, and Manly Night, when Hef and the guys (the guys who are here, a

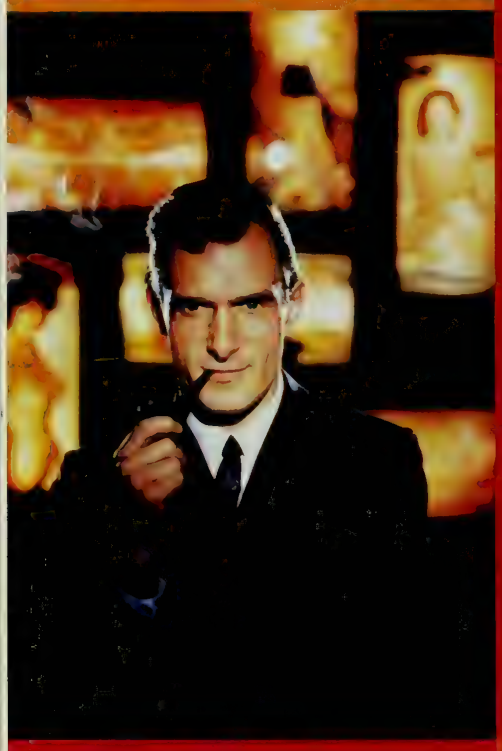


N AT WORK

athrobe and pajamas,
ner reviews some material
Playboy on his circular,
or-driven, rotating,
ating bed, at the Playboy
nsion East in Chicago,
a 1967.



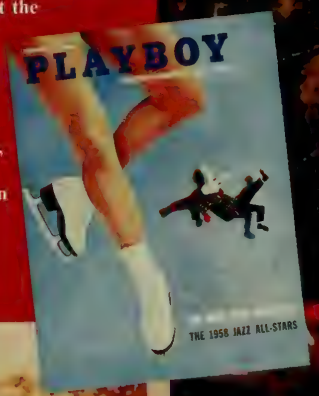




IT'S GOOD TO BE THE KING

This page, clockwise from top left: one of the Alberto Vargas illustrations that were integral to *Playboy* in the 60s; Hef, at 27, with the first issue of *Playboy*, November 1953; Hef on his private jet, 1973; a still from the syndicated *Playboy After Dark* TV series, with Dan Rowan and Dick Martin, 1969; Hef and girlfriend Barbi Benton, 1969; Hef with pipe, 1962; *Playboy* cover, February 1958. *Opposite, clockwise from top left:* the piano bar at the Playboy Club in New York City, 1962; Lynn Winchell, Miss December 1967; Playboy Mansion, 1975; Bunnies frolic by a waterfall at the Playboy Club Hotel in Ocho Rios, Jamaica, circa 1972; Bunnies with Hef, Chicago Playboy Club, 1960; Jo Collins, Miss December 1964, visits soldiers in Vietnam; a shot of Marilyn Monroe first published by Hefner.

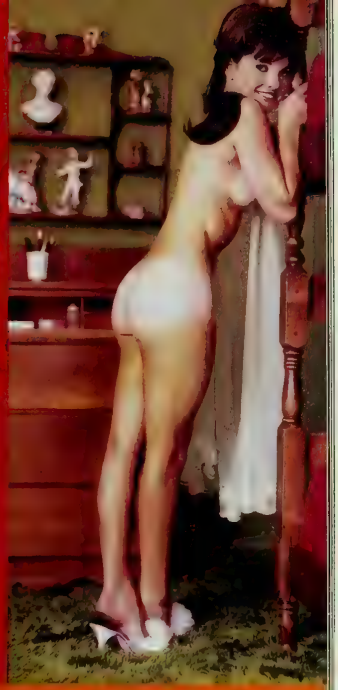


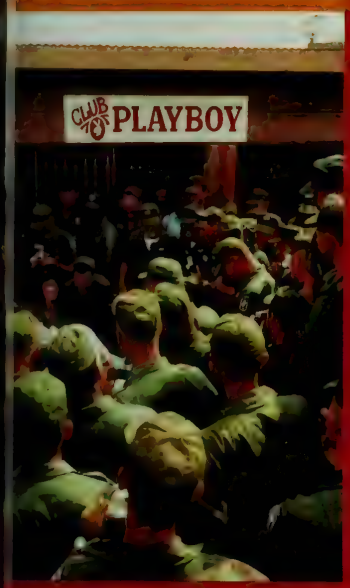


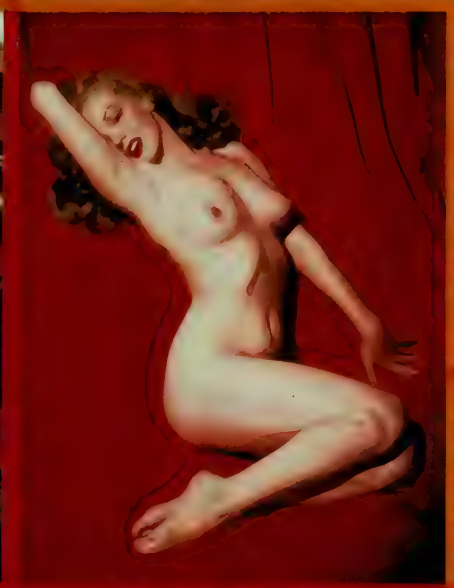









CLUB
PLAYBOY









HE WAS ALSO THE FIRST PARTY D.J.

With 11 Playmates in attendance, Hef shows off his stereo system at the Playboy Mansion for a December 1961 pictorial called "Playmate Holiday House Party."



"What I've sai
all along is the majo
beneficiary of th
sexual revolution
women, not men

ll as guys like Ray Anthony and Jerry
le) watch old cowboy serials and Tarzan
vies, W. C. Fields and Charlie Chan.
There's Classic Movie Night (screwball
medies and wartime adventures), and
st-Run Movie Night. Hef's on "the Bel
r circuit," their joking name for a loop
homes, like the nearby Spellings', with
cess to movies as they hit the theaters.
f is a devotee of the movies. ("My life
mes from the movies," he says; he
esn't say which ones.)
Then there are the nights when Hef
es the girlfriends out clubbing, and
re's Family Night, when he spends time
th Kimberley and their sons.
Tonight is not Family Night.
The two boys, Cooper and Marston,
s 9 and 10, come bouncing into the room.
"Hi, Daddy!"
"Hi, Daddy!"
"Hi, little guys."
Hef is affable. The card game goes on.
The boys fling themselves over the backs
leather couches, watching their father,
if waiting for something.
The men are all whistling "Take the
Train."
"Bye, Daddy."
"Bye, Daddy."
"Good-bye, little guys," Hef says.
They come to him; he embraces them.
Their nanny, a blonde with wire-framed
asses, escorts them back next door.
In interviews, Hef often reminisces
out how his mother, Grace—a Method-
, Nebraskan—never hugged or kissed
m, because, she thought, it would
pread germs." "And so I was always
oking for that love denied me in early
ildhood . . . " (But that's not his favorite
ckup line. He says it's: "My name is
ugh Hefner.")
"Sir . . . " A butler hovers at the door.
Regina is on the phone."
"Oh!" Hef bounds from his chair and
akes for the telephone room next to
e screening room. He often says, "I'm
ving the fantasy life of an adolescent
oy."
Regina's one of the girlfriends.
"I can't tell them apart," says Kasten.
"Neither can he," says Doc.
"He gives them numbers," Kent says.
"Ninety-nine, Barbara Feldon," Don
dams says. "Had a droopy eye, made her
ry sexy."
Hef comes back, humming, smiling.
"Mr. Hefner, are you going out tonight?"
dams asks.
"Yeah, wanna meet me at Las Palmas?"
lef cackles. It's an L.A. nightclub popular
mong 20-year-olds.
"You are that rare thing in civilization,"
Adams says wryly, "an intelligent man who
is happy."
Hef cocks his good ear.
There's a sound like a litter of puppies
has been let into the Mansion, and their
yipping restless energy and clattering toe-
nails are advancing across the marble.
Now there are four young women—Buffy,
Cathi, Katie, and Regina—swarming the
end of the card table.
They look remarkably alike, in tight
jeans—each the kind of girl you meet at
a bowling alley in Sheboygan, the best-
looking blonde in a no-account town.
The card game stops. Flashes of plat-
inum hair—white teeth—bare midriffs—jew-
elry from the mall.
"Hi, honey!" they say, almost in unison.
"Meet Girl Scout Troop 36," Hef says,
with a kind of ironic pride.
"Honey, we got Chinese food," the girl-
friends say.
"It gives you that inscrutable look," says
Hef.
The girlfriends giggle.
"Honey, look what we did!" says Cathi,
the youngest one, 19, tromping over on
platforms.
"Ooooh," Hef says. She hands him a
photograph—seven platinum heads and bub-
bly cleavage. "That's wunnnderful."
It was their mission of the day, having
it framed. Mostly, they seem to have been
shopping at the Beverly Center, all hold-
ing bags. They say Hef gives them each
"an allowance."
Cathi leans down, cleavage spilling.
Hef kisses her, openmouthed, clutching
her arm.
The men hold their breath.
So do the other girlfriends.
"Bye, honey!" they say, bustling back
out of the room.
Cheerily, Hef goes back to his cards.

Hef's marriage to Kimberley had come at the end of a very rough decade for Playboy Enterprises, his empire, which at one point had included a magazine with a circulation of seven million, clubs and casinos all over the world, and a DC-9 called *The Big Bunny,* which Hefner claimed was the only passenger plane ever to be painted black. Hef says, "It was cool."

Throughout the 80s, the Moral Majority had waged a campaign against pornography from the right, while Andrea Dworkin and Gloria Steinem attacked from the left. AIDS made sex scary. Political correctness was in. And yet the hard-core porn trade was also flourishing, cutting into what Hef calls the "classier" *Playboy*'s profits.

In the 80s, the magazine's circulation fell to 3.5 million, from which it has never recovered. The last Playboy Clubs, in Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York, closed their doors in 1986 (singles bars had made the clubs obsolete)—which meant the end of the Bunnies' heyday; they had mostly been waitresses.

And then, in 1985, Hef had a stroke. "I was running, like everybody else," he said in a Playboy Enterprises promotional video shortly after he married Kimberley. It seemed he'd discovered monogamy and domestic bliss just in time. "I had to take that trip, that adventure," he said, "necessary to find myself, and make sense of it all."

But then, by the late 90s, just as his marriage was failing, things were looking up for Playboy, somewhat. It had been a good 10 years for almost everybody, and the company bounced back with new ventures in video and the Internet. The Web, it seemed, was providing new places for porn to be furtive and secret again—something Hef had actually been battling against all his life.

"We're poised to explode," says Christie Hefner, Hef's daughter and Playboy's C.E.O. She's built a career on being the serious face of the company, and isn't one to make off-color jokes.

Christie's staying at the Mansion tonight, too; it's a quick business trip for her; she lives in Chicago with her husband. Her things are upstairs in Marston and Cooper's old room. Hef has left the company to the boys, not her, in his will.

"There has never been a more exciting time for us than now," Christie says, sitting down in the Mansion's long dining room with the chandeliers.

She's graying, sharp-featured, attractive; dresses like Diane on *Cheers*—like it's still 1988, the year she took over the company from her father, three years after his stroke.

She was born in 1952, during his first marriage, to Mildred "Millie" Williams, one year before *Playboy*'s birth. Hef was an unhappy ad copywriter for *Esquire* when he sent a letter to potential investors for his erotic magazine, urging, "Sex is surefire."

"We're going global," Christie's saying. "Men in China are enjoying our products."

"If she didn't exist, we'd have to invent her," Hef likes to say. When he announced he was "back," in 1998, there were rumors he was also taking back control of the company from his CONTINUED ON PAGE



Behind the dazzling, billion-dollar modern-art collection—Cézannes, Picassos, Renoirs, Matisses, and Modiglianis—in the Louvre's Musée de l'Orangerie lies a scandal that rocked France's culturati in 1959 with its sensational charges of attempted murder, blackmail, and forgery, among other crimes. As Fort Worth's Kimbell Art Museum displays the paintings, JOHN RICHARDSON digs into the chilling tale of their former owner, the beautiful and utterly ruthless Domenica Guillaume Walter, who married celebrated art dealer Paul Guillaume and, after his death, would stop at nothing to keep control of his treasure trove of 20th-century masterpieces

CRIMES O



PRICELESS HORDE

From far left: Domenica Guillaume Walter at a hearing into her brother's criminal plot to defame her adopted son, a potential heir to her first husband's estate, 1959; *Large Bather*, by Pablo Picasso, 1921, from the Guillaume collection; *Paul Guillaume, Novo Pilota*, 1915, by Amedeo Modigliani, one of the artists the collector helped to launch.

F THE ART


SINCE DERAIN WAS HAVING AN AFFAIR WITH DOMENICA, HE WA
ABLE TO CATCH TO PERFECTION HER COLD, CALCULATING GAZ





MR. AND MRS.

Paul Guillaume at his desk in Paris, 1914. *Below,* an exhibition of his art collection at a Paris gallery in 1929. *Opposite, Portrait of Mrs. Paul Guillaume in a Wide-Brimmed Hat,* by André Derain, 1928–29.

The spectacular show of masterpieces from the Musée de l'Orangerie currently on view at the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth commemorates the phenomenally successful art dealer Paul Guillaume (1891–1934), who put most of this magnificent collection together. It also commemorates one of France's most sensational art scandals. Twenty-five years after Guillaume's death, his lethal widow, Domenica, her no less lethal lover, Dr. Maurice Lacour, and her conniving brother, Jean Lacaze, ıuld be accused by her adopted son, Jean-Pierre, of plotting to ırder him. Besides attempted murder, the case involved charges blackmail, entrapment, forgery, will tampering, and what the ench call *proxénétisme*—pimping.

There were also overtones of political skulduggery. Lacour ıs a right-wing fanatic with a militant past, and some of his -conspirators shared his extremist views. When the scandal oke, he spent several months in jail, whereas Lacaze was out a matter of days. The mastermind, Domenica, proved unıkable. ("We are like the pharaohs," she once said.) Her rate ruthlessness, her affairs with men in high places (one of em a prime minister), and, above all, her possession of a forne in modern masterpieces meant that she was never even arged. She was, however, obliged to cede her collection—16 ézannes, 23 Renoirs, 5 Modiglianis, 12 Picassos, 10 Matisses, Derains, and 22 Soutines—which might well fetch a billion ıllars today, to the French state for a pittance. The Musée de Orangerie, a subsection of the Louvre, was remodeled to reive it. At the time of the *affaire*—which made headlines, day ter day, for the first few months of 1959—I was living in ance, and on one occasion met this aging bimbo. A great role r Joan Crawford, I remember thinking—one part steel, one ırt asbestos, one part nylon. This feeling was confirmed when read a frightening book about Domenica, *La Dame au Grand hapeau* (The Woman in the Wide-Brimmed Hat), by Florence ystram, a lifelong friend of Jean Walter, who was the second the two husbands Domenica managed to enslave. After that I ırted checking out the press cuttings. *Quelle histoire!*

Before scrutinizing Domenica, let us take a look at her first husband, who was no less self-invented than she was. Shame at being the son of a uniformed bank messenger was the propelling force in Paul Guillaume's upward mobility. By the time he was 17, in 1908, this baby-faced entrepreneur had left home and carved out a unique niche for himself in Paris. Although he aspired to write and paint, and even schooled himself do a bit of both, Guillaume was in too much of a hurry to ke the time and trouble that those vocations necessitate. Instead, he pretended he was studying law and got a job in a gage—not any old garage, but one with a *clientèle de luxe,* which ermitted him tantalizing glimpses of the Parisian beau monde e was hell-bent on crashing. Guillaume's garage imported rubber for its tires directly from Africa, and one day the rubber ırgo included a bonus: a tribal mask from Gabon. It was a velation. After devoting all his spare time to studying similar rtifacts in museums, Guillaume set about importing examples from African traders.

Guillaume had a knack for being in the right place at the right time. Living as he did in Montmartre, he hung out in the bohemian cafés frequented by Picasso's band of friends, among them the poets Guillaume Apollinaire and Max Jacob, who were always eager to make money on the side. Thanks in part to Picasso, who had endowed his great painting *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* with tribal masks a year or two earlier, *art nègre* soon became the rage in avant-garde circles. With Apollinaire's encouragement, Guillaume developed into the leading purveyor of tribal art to modernist artists and collectors. Since these artists liked to use their work as currency, Guillaume found himself with enough Picassos, Braques, Derains, Matisses, and Vlamincks to open a small gallery. He would soon prove to have an almost infallible eye for the new young painters and, no less important, the new young poets, who would ferret them out for him.

Guillaume was just the man, Picasso and Apollinaire felt, to launch their new Italian discovery, Giorgio de Chirico, so they arranged for this unknown dealer to take this unknown artist's entire output for 100 francs a month. The outbreak of war in 1914 shut down Guillaume's first gallery and whisked him in and out of the army and in and out of a second gallery before he finally settled into lavish premises on Rue la Boétie. Meanwhile, Max Jacob had put him onto the proprietress of a Montmartre cabaret, La Belle Gabrielle, who for years had fed Maurice Utrillo in exchange for art. Guillaume paid her 1,500 francs for 35 canvases, which he would later sell for around 200,000 francs apiece, the equivalent of about $16,000 at the time.

Jacob also introduced the dealer to another undiscovered Italian, Amedeo Modigliani. Besides acquiring a number of his finest works for a few hundred francs, Guillaume would inspire some of this artist's most perceptive portraits: subtly mocking images of a plumpish little fellow with a tiny rosebud mouth and a Charlie Chaplin mustache, trying but failing to mask his ordinariness under a look of assumed disdain. To flatter the sitter, Modigliani inscribed the best of the portraits of him with the words *Novo Pilota* (New Pilot)—an identity that this driven young dealer was desperately eager to project. To boost his artists and his gallery, not to mention himself, Guillaume started up a magazine, *Les Arts à Paris.* He would write most of the puff pieces himself, under fanciful pseudonyms—Dr. Allainby, Colin D'Arbois, Captain W. Redstone, Colonel Bonardi, Le Nègre Bleu. By the age of 25 he had promoted himself into a celebrity.

And then, in 1920, Guillaume decided to marry. He chose an

utterly unscrupulous, dynamically sexy young beauty from a dim, glove-making town in southwestern France. Like Guillaume, Juliette Lacaze was deeply ashamed of her background. Although from an established family, her father had lost all his money and ended up working as a lawyer's clerk. She would later destroy all documentary and photographic evidence of her early years. After her father's death, she and her handsome, subservient brother, Jean, left the boondocks for Paris in quest of affluence, fame, and fashionable friends. Jean went to work for Shell Oil, where he eventually did very well for himself, but his sister's career is more of a mystery. She is thought to have started off selling gloves in a department store, and also to have done a stint as a hatcheck girl in a nightclub, but in view of her striking looks and her aversion to petit bourgeois life, she is likely to have been dependent on the favors of generous admirers. One of these men must have taken her to Nice, for it was there, one Sunday in 1920, that Paul Guillaume picked her up. They proved to be a perfect match.





After their marriage, Guillaume would memorialize their encounter in Nice by changing her name to Domenica, which suited this dominatrix extremely well. Years later she had a wall of her chalet at Megève frescoed with a garish mural of Saint Dominic and the words *Domenica ora pro nobis* (Domenica pray for us).



Like her husband, Domenica spent the next few years styling and re-styling herself—her look, her accent, her persona. We can follow the process in successive portraits by André Derain, Guillaume's best-selling artist. In the first portrait—started in the year of her marriage and finished in 1925—Domenica still has a trace of the anxiety and awkwardness of a small-town girl who has come up the hard way. In the second, much flashier one, of her in a huge, halo-like straw hat, finished in 1929, she is all artifice. Since Derain was having an affair with her, he was able to catch to perfection her cold, calculating gaze and overgroomed, actressy look. The painting—so overtly flattering, so subliminally mean—is a lie that tells the truth.

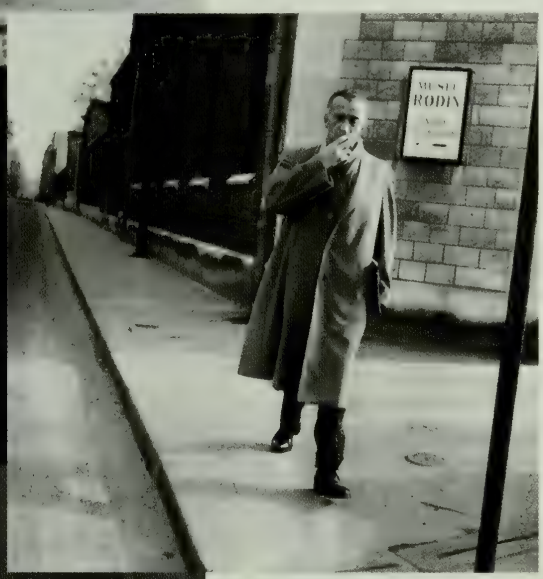
Underneath the mask, Domenica was miserly and manipulative—loathed by the servants she overworked and underpaid, loathed by the hairdressers and manicurists she never tipped, loathed by the women whose husbands she tried to seduce. (On a summer's day she would fan her knees with her frock and murmur how hot she was.) Women complained that she was vulgar; men said that was what made her so peppy. Guillaume did not seem to mind as long as she kept his clients happy. Domenica's



Olympic skill and stamina at social and political climbing and her ability to disarm and beguile clients as devious and demanding as the gallery's biggest buyer, Dr. Albert Barnes of Philadelphia, would prove to be a huge advantage to her husband.

Guillaume's early success had stemmed from his rapport with the painters and poets of Montmartre and Montparnasse, which enabled him to buy works of exceptional interest and quality. After marrying Domenica, he distanced himself from bohemia and concentrated on public relations and sales strategies: how to unload his treasures onto clients who wanted to be "with it" but who were generally ambivalent about modernism and primitivism. "I like it," the wife would typically say, "but it won't go with the boiserie or the Sèvres or the Tanagra figurines mother collected." As a result, the husband would leave without buying the Fauve Matisse or the Benin bronze.

Tired of missing out on sale after sale, Guillaume took to sticking his contemporary paintings into 17th- and 18th-century frames. Tastefully pickled or otherwise patinated, these served as buffers between modernist imagery and period décor. Nothing provided one of Utrillo's seedy backstreet views with more of what dealers call "wall power" than a handsome Régence frame. The same with the naïf paintings of "Le Douanier" Rousseau. On a tip from Apollinaire, Guillaume had snapped these up for next to nothing, and after framing them as lavishly as he would a Manet, he sold them for 200 times their cost. Guillaume was likewise at pains to have his tribal sculptures beautifully mounted by a Japanese craftsman. Serious collectors denounced these tricks as packaging. They also denounced the dealer's cynical exploitation of the former modernist André Derain, whose prices had soared as the quality of his work had plunged. His promotion of Édouard Goerg, a facile painter of salable flower pieces and winsome clones, was held against him as well. Gone was the instinctive modernism of Guillaume's earlier days. His gallery catered increasingly to the modish nouveaux riches with whom he and Domenica had come to identify.



***FILM NOIR* CAST**

Clockwise from top left: **Domenica Guillaume Walter with Bernard Lorjou, a second-rate artist she promoted, 1959; Jean-Pierre Guillaume, Domenica's adopted son, with his call-girl mistress, Maïté Goyenetch, 1959; Jean Lacaze, Domenica's brother, who tried to bribe Goyenetch to testify against Jean-Pierre; Camille Rayon, hired by Domenica's lover, Dr. Maurice Lacour, to kill Jean-Pierre; Jean-Pierre at a Paris newsstand; Domenica leaving court with her female lawyer; Maurice Lacour in 1959.**



De Chirico's brother, Alberto Savinio, has described Paul Guillaume at his apogee in 1926:

> When he entered the Hôtel Drouôt [the principal Parisian auction house] majestically enveloped in a fur coat, his appearance would trigger an audible murmur from the assembled collectors and dealers. The auctioneer would stop auctioning, his hammer in the air. A small bisexual army of assistants and secretaries would hang on Guillaume's every word, obeying his slightest sign with military precision. Two superb Hispano-Suizas would be parked at the curb, the chauffeurs motionless at the wheel, dressed up like generals in the Tsar's Imperial Guard.

The bank messenger's son had come to see himself as a cross between the American collector Henry Clay Frick and the British

dealer Joseph Duveen, who would be ennobled by the King of England for skimming the cream off many an ancestral collection. Guillaume now behaved as if he were not so much a merchant as a Maecenas, who might eventually deign to give his magnificent collection to the Louvre or a subsidiary, thereby demonstrating that he had a more discriminating and adventurous eye than the country's fuddy-duddy museum directors. A major exhibition of works from the collection at a Paris gallery in 1929 revealed what great treasures he had accumulated, but in typical fashion he overplayed his hand. "The only serious private collections today," Guillaume boasted, "belong to a few particularly perceptive dealers." Such vanity made a lot of people in the art world cringe.

In 1930, Guillaume opened a London branch; he also appointed Mrs. Averell Harriman, who had recently opened a New York gallery, to be his U.S. representative. But due to the Great Depression, neither of these outlets prospered, and the Guillaumes had to cut back on their lifestyle. He began to look more and more puffy and depressed. Both he and his wife were having affairs: he reportedly with Jeanne Castel, an art dealer with whom he had long been associated; she with Jean Walter, a powerful businessman and architect, who had designed the building overlooking the Bois de Boulogne where he and the Guillaumes lived. Although their huge, luxurious apartments were separated by several floors, this ménage à trois situation was not at all to Guillaume's taste. As he grew sadder and sicker, he seems to have realized that he had sold out, and in conversation he would hark back to the great days of his youthful discoveries. And then all of a sudden, on October 1, 1934, Paul Guillaume died at the age of 42, perhaps of a burst appendix.

Domenica had allegedly had her tubes tied before the marriage. In the absence of children, she was Guillaume's principal heir. Of late, however, he had threatened her: "I have changed my will. Unless you bear me a child, I will leave my collection to a foundation." He might well have done so. Why else would Domenica have been so terrified of losing the collection that she shoved a cushion under her dress and announced that she was pregnant? The cushion had a way of slipping from its moorings, but such was Domenica's sangfroid that she got away with the charade. In due course she managed to procure a newborn infant—said to be a foundling of unknown parentage—at the cost of 5,000 francs on the baby market. However, there were also persistent rumors that, before he died, Guillaume had arranged for a mistress to have his baby, so it may well have been fathered by him. The child was christened Jean-Pierre and nicknamed Polo. The press would refer to him as *"l'enfant du miracle."*

As things turned out, the cushion business had been a waste of the widow's time. A will eventually materialized, leaving Domenica everything. The fact that a codicil had been filed 10 days after Guillaume's death was not thought suspicious—at the time. According to the catalogue for the current exhibition, there was also a mysterious letter to his widow, which supposedly clarified Guillaume's intentions regarding his collection but was never made public. Meanwhile, Domenica continued to carry on her very public affair with Jean Walter, who had fallen besottedly in love with her. Besides three children, Walter had an exemplary wife, who refused to give him a divorce. Apart from this adulterous lapse, he was famously ethical—so unlike Domenica in this respect that friends were amazed at his tolerance of her. As long as Walter was unable to marry her, she insisted on her right to have other lovers. It was only when his first wife's death in 19 enabled them to wed that Walter was in a position to put do his foot and impose fidelity.

For some years, Walter's career as an architect had be eclipsed by an involvement of a very different natu In 1925, in settlement of a bad debt of 75,000 fran he had accepted the mining rights to a tract of land eastern Morocco. In the course of inspecting this b ren terrain, Walter, who knew a bit about geology, n ticed that the rocks were speckled with galena. T indicated the presence of lead and zinc. Back in Paris, he rais a million francs, and with the help of his son, Jacques, start mining on a small scale. Within a year the price of lead had f en so low that they had to shut down their operation, but 1936 the threat of war sent the price soaring again, and the W ters reopened what had come to be called the Zellidja Mini Corporation. They soon discovered they were sitting on the ri est deposit of lead in North Africa.

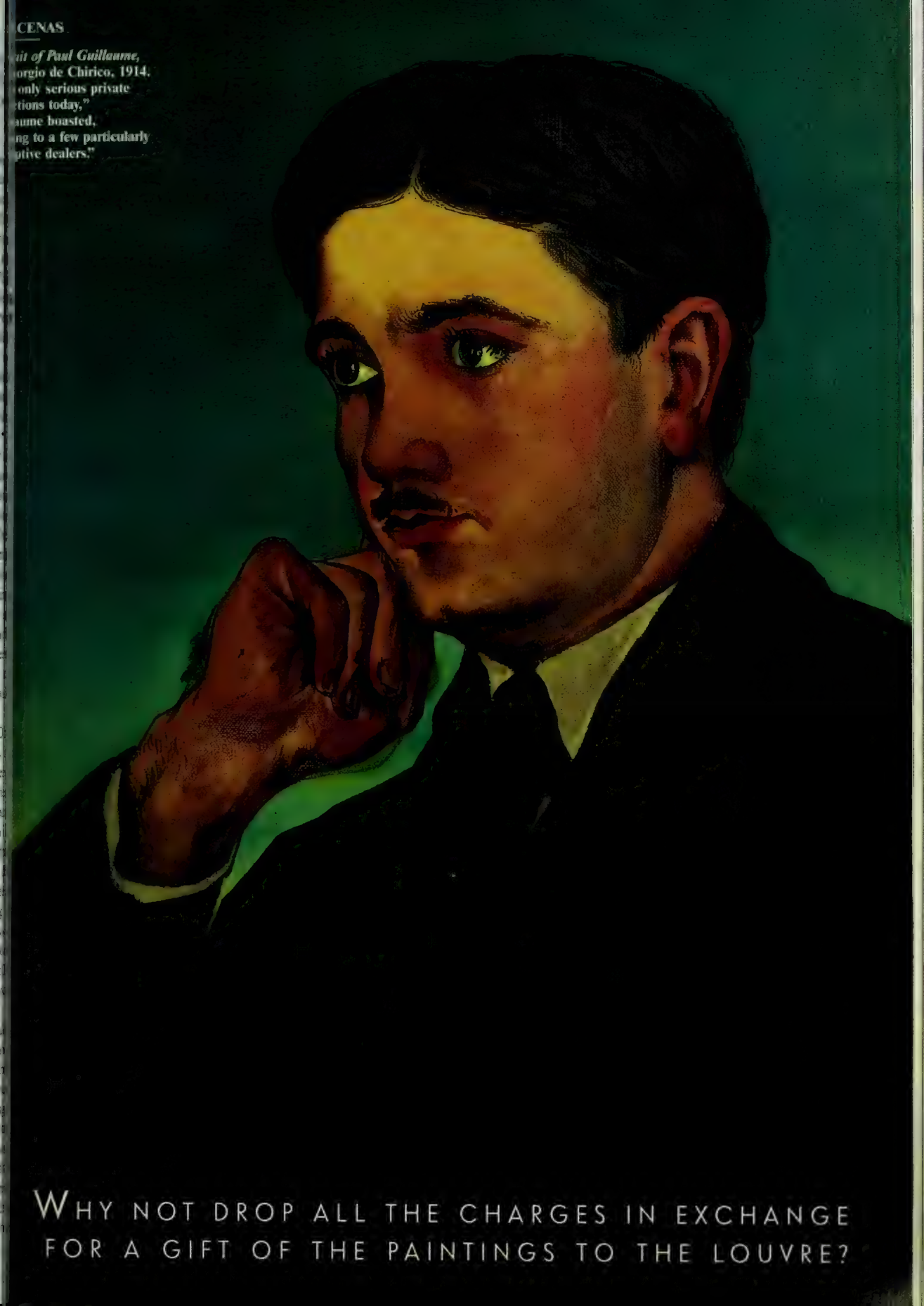
During the war the German occupiers pressured Walter turn the mines over to them. Passionately anti-German like m Alsatians, he refused, and the Gestapo threw him in jail a threatened to kill him. According to Domenica's chauffeur, s had a German lover on the side, and had allegedly bartered h body for her husband's life. Walter is unlikely to have coun nanced such a quid pro quo. However, it does seem that s used her connections to arrange preferential treatment for hi While in jail, Walter managed to write a treatise on hospital chitecture and conceive plans for the village of Bou Beker, wh he would later build to house his 10,000 Moroccan employe Walter was not freed until the Liberation. Trust Domenica make the young officer designated to release her husband w while she dressed up to the nines for the jeep trip to the jail.

Meanwhile, *l'enfant du miracle,* whom Walter had insisted D menica officially adopt, had spent the war years with a nanny Cannes. According to Florence Trystram's book, he had s virtually nothing of his mother, which was just as well, for wh he was returned to her in Paris, she found him both an emb rassment and an encumbrance. There was no room for him the magnificent new apartment the Walters had taken on Avenue Gabriel, a block away from the presidential Palais l'Élysée. As long as he lived at home, Jean-Pierre had to sl on a mattress under the dining-room table. If she was givin dinner, he would sleep in her bathtub. Hell for the boy; hell, t for Domenica, who was maniacally finicky about domestic tails. Every piece of furniture had a sticker indicating exa where it should be placed; the same with objects. For disreg ing Madame's injunctions, servants were fired.

Domenica could not very well fire Jean-Pierre, but she co most certainly torture him for being a misfit in her overma cured, over-regimented household, where the brooms were nu bered and labeled and the maids had to wear overshoes so as to mess the floors. She also became ever more morbidly sti with the boy. The chauffeur remembered supplying him w the pocket money she failed to provide, and if he needed a p of shoes, she would give him one shoe and make him wait for other. His clothes were hand-me-downs from his Walter cous No wonder he failed his final exams twice, dropped out of prestigious Lycée Henri IV, and spent his time hanging out a chasing girls. As Jean-Pierre grew up, CONTINUED ON PAGE

CENAS

it of Paul Guillaume,
orgio de Chirico, 1914.
only serious private
tions today,"
aume boasted,
ng to a few particularly
otive dealers."



WHY NOT DROP ALL THE CHARGES IN EXCHANGE FOR A GIFT OF THE PAINTINGS TO THE LOUVRE?



BATHING BOUVIERS

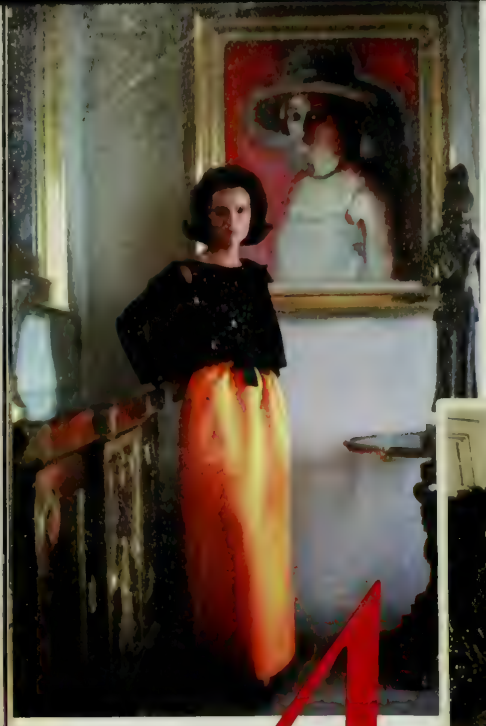
Sisters Lee Radziwill and Jackie Kennedy on holiday in Conca, a fishing village on Italy's Amalfi coast, summer 1962.

Snapshots from



Like her older sister, Jackie,
Lee Bouvier seemed born to glamour and fame, with her 1950
anointing by *Life* as New York's leading debutante and
r series of high-profile marriages. With photographs from her scrapbook-like memoir,
Happy Times, LEE RADZIWILL recaptures her privileged childhood,
he enchanted Camelot court of her brother-in-law John F. Kennedy, and her unique
career as jet-set muse, patron, and friend to Truman Capote, Andy Warhol,
and Rudolf Nureyev. Text by AMY FINE COLLINS

a Fairy Tale





LEE *FAMILLE*

Clockwise from left: Lee photographed by Mark Shaw, 1962; the Bouvier sisters in 1949; Christmas 1961 in Palm Beach, with President Kennedy handing a stocking to John junior; the First Lady, John junior, and Caroline.





As Lee Radziwill recounts in the final, elegiac chapter of her new scrapbook-like memoir, *Happy Times,* she and her sibling, Jacqueline, were repeatedly exhorted by their dashing father "to excel, to be superior, to be the best." The younger by about four years of what Randolph Churchill called "those whispering sisters," Lee had to quadruple her efforts to keep up with this exacting paternal directive. Though "for long periods of time my sister and I were so close we hardly bothered with anyone else," she says, "my father favored Jackie," the "dominant" of the two girls. "I was the soft, chubby one," fated for an obscure life "in a rose-covered cottage."

But in short order this would-be wallflower metamorphosed (via the girls' schools Chapin, Holton-Arms, Miss Porter's, and Sarah Lawrence) into a svelte and self-possessed swan. At 17 she catapulted to fame when Cholly Knickerbocker, and then *Life,* featured her as New York's Debutante of the Year for 1950. From this decorous platform she soared onward and upward—to the editorial office of fashion oracle Diana Vreeland ("I loved her directness, her sense of fun," Lee says); to London in 1955 with her first husband, the handsome publishing scion Michael Canfield; to the altar in 1959 with Prince Stanislas Radziwill, a bighearted Polish émigré 20 years her senior, with whom she had two children, Anthony and Christina.

Destiny next delivered Princess Lee Radziwill to the fairy-tale court of Camelot, and *Happy Times*'s most entrancing images are glimpses of the domestic rites of J.F.K.'s Thousand Days.

"My favorite pictures," Radziwill says, "are the simple snapsh
I took with my Brownie over the Christmas holidays in Pa
Beach, where we'd rent a house and stay together, all under
roof. Christmas was then the most enjoyable time; now I
less fond of it." Here is the president, in narrow yellow trous
and black velvet slippers, on December 25, 1961, playing nu
ery games on the floor with his toddler son, John, and neph

Photographs from *Happy Times,* by Lee Radziwill, to be published in April by Assouline; © 2001 by Lee Radziwill.



LOVE LEE

A 1977 Harry Benson portrait of Lee Radziwill in Southampton, Long Island, where she has spent many summers.

Happy Times's *latent theme of lost possibilities resonates both publicly and privately.*


"Very, very luxurious,
Diana Vreeland said of Radziwill's
décor. And very, very distinctly
arranged for men
KRIBOURKI
March 23, 58



Lee in the White House Rose Garden with her two-year-old daughter, Tina, Jackie, and the First Family's German shepherd, Clipper, 1962. *Opposite,* René Bouché sketched Lee for *Vogue,* March 23, 1958.





CAMELOT CAMERA

Left, President Kennedy (center) aboard the *Honey Fitz* off Palm Beach in 1961. Stas Radziwill is at right; Rose Kennedy is the foreground. *Above,* Lee with Ambassa John Kenneth Galbraith in India, March 1962. *Below,* Henry Clarke's portrait of Le and her French bulldog, Thomas, 1960.

Tony. There is the First Lady, vividly resurrected in red, stretching her legs before the hearth, one shoe on, the other off, while John and Caroline cavort around her in homemade angel costumes. We see a virile, animated Kennedy lunching with brothers-in-law Stas Radziwill and Stephen Smith aboard the *Honey Fitz,* the presidential yacht, in 1961. Elsewhere, Lee joins her sister on the "extraordinary" 1962 goodwill tour of India, where, in crisp little shifts and fetching big hairdos, they hear the children of Udaipur chant, "Welcome to the American maharani," and ride in a howdah on the back of an eight-foot-tall elephant. "I will always remember Nehru as the most fascinating, gentle, and sensual man I ever met," she writes.

"A big loss for everyone is that there are no photographs of our trip to Morocco. But King Hassan—he gave me his white Arabian stallion when I made the mistake of admiring it!—would not allow any press. One never really realizes how special these moments are until they're gone," Radziwill reflects wistfully. "We were presumptuous to assume this magic would continue."



But the shock of November 1963 did not dispel all the enchantment from Radziwill's "special and privileged life." She moved on, leaving behind the world of politics for the more congenial sphere of the arts. Trying, in turn, stage and television acting, talk-show hostessing, and magazine journalism, she found, for a time, a métier in decorating. Unwittingly, she sparked a trend in interior design for *turquerie* when *Vogue* published Cecil Beaton's photographs (reproduced in *Happy Times*) of her richly patterned, seraglio-like London town house in 1966. "Very, very luxurious," Vreeland said of Radziwill's décor. "And very, very distinctly arranged for *men.*"

In spite of her intrepid forays into other fields, Radziwill never quite lived down her brief infatuation, fomented by Truman Capote, with the theater. "I didn't go onstage until my brother-in-law was no longer president," Radziwill explains. "Still, my husband couldn't understand why a woman who had everything would want to act. But I felt that if you're not taking risks and

"We were presumptuous
o assume this magic would
continue."



LEE AND SYMPHONY

Composer Leonard Bernstein and Lee Radziwill at a 1961 White House reception.









THE GROOVIER BOUVIER

Clockwise from above: Lee rides a pony while Jackie holds the reins, East Hampton, circa 1937; Tina and Tony at their grandmother's Newport estate, Hammersmith Farm, 1967; Lee with Mick and Bianca Jagger in Montauk, 1972; Lee and Jackie on an elephant in India, 1962; the *Honey Fitz;* Lee and her dog Caprice in Central Park, circa 1940.









RADZIWILL CHIC

Clockwise from left: Lee poses for *McCall's,* 1962; John junior and Tony Radziwill frolic in the sea at Skorpios, summer 1971; a circa-1959 portrait; Prince Stanislas and Princess Lee on their honeymoon in Jamaica, 1959; Lee and Tony strolling in Ravello, Italy, August 1962; Jackie and Lee in Venice during their "Special Summer," 1956, the subject of their scrapbook, published in 1974.









opening yourself up to criticism, you're not really living. I never wanted to be just an observer; I always wanted to be a participator." Capote had his interpretation of the unreasonably venomous reactions to Radziwill's professional endeavors: "No matter what Lee did," the writer said, "the press was going to come down on her like hell . . . because they really wanted to say nasty things about Mrs. Kennedy and never could."

Radziwill emerges most strikingly from her retrospective collage "of places, people, and things I have loved" as a muse, patron, and companion to some of the 20th century's greatest creative talents—in literature (Capote), dance (Rudolf Nureyev), music (Leonard Bernstein), art (Andy Warhol), decorating (Renzo Mongiardino), photography (Beaton), and fashion design (Yves Saint Laurent). "Nureyev was the closest to me," she says. "I don't know of any other artist who had his curiosity. It was a real hunger, what kept him so vibrant. My friendships with these people were really just a matter of timing," she adds dismissively. "I would like very much to be a philanthropist, a patron of the arts in a very serious way. How much pleasure it would give one to fulfill other people's dreams and desires."

In spite of its upbeat title, a bittersweetness haunts *Happy Times*—probably because of the reader's acute consciousness of what has been omitted from the album. J.F.K., Jackie, John junior, and Tony Radziwill (not to mention Capote, Nureyev, and Warhol) all died prematurely, and the book's latent theme of lost possibilities is heightened because it resonates both publicly and privately. "I miss each of them enormously," says Radziwill, who today lives mostly in Paris. "But they were all so alive, it is as if they are still here now. I can't feel nostalgic. Nostalgia is dangerous because it can turn into a melancholia. My memories give me great pleasure, enormous nourishment, whatever strength I have. And the more that time passes, the more precious these memories become. Doing this project has served as a reminder that one should not take fame too seriously—and that one should never throw anything out!" □

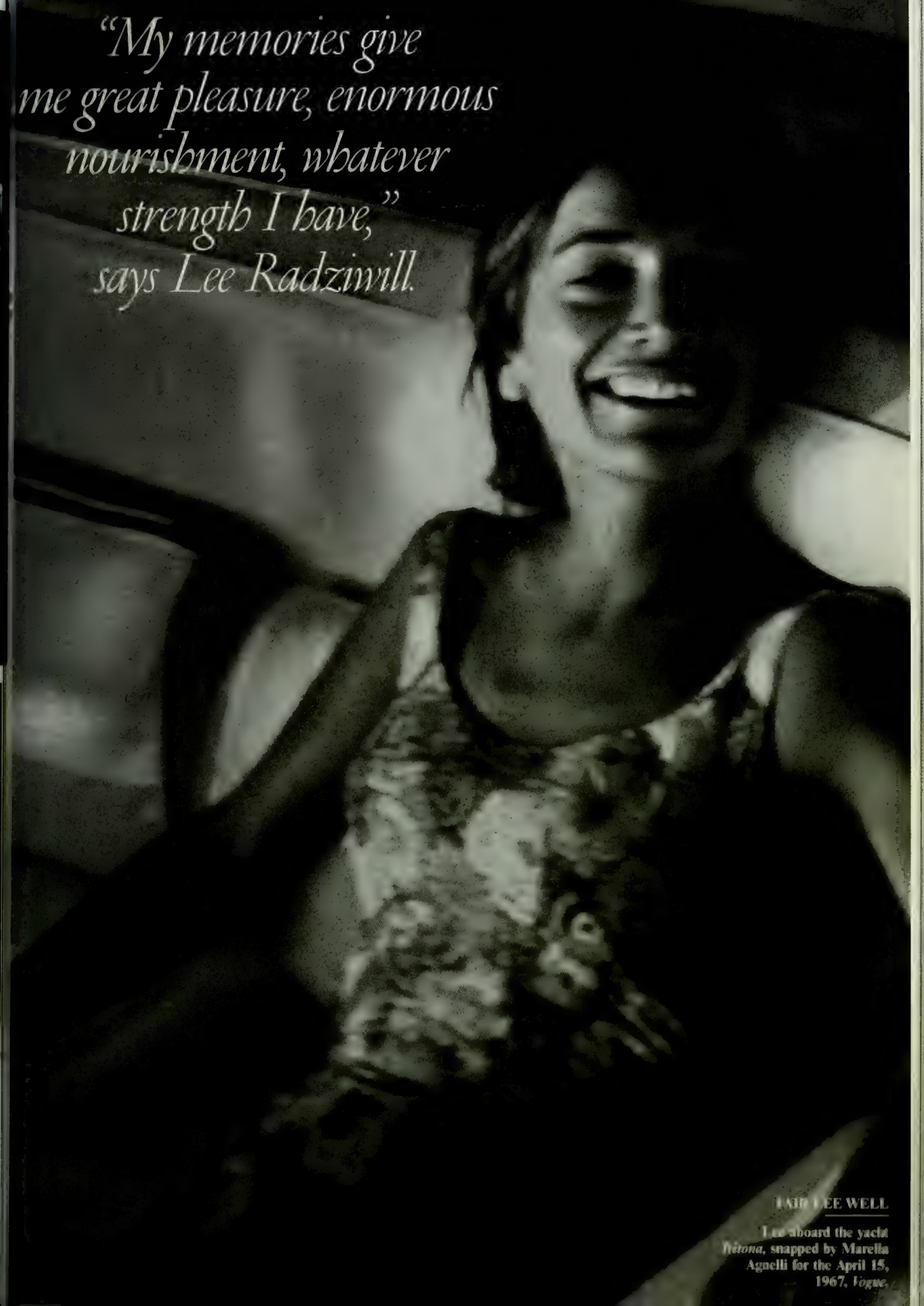






FAIRY PRINCESS

From top: Lee with Truman Capote at his Black and White Ball, New York City, November 28, 1966; a 1974 Andy Warhol Polaroid of Lee in Montauk; Peter Beard's painted snapshot of Vincent Fremont, Warhol, Tony, Lee, Jed Johnson, and Tina at the Pop artist's Montauk compound, summer 1972.



FAIR LEE WELL

Lee aboard the yacht *Nirvana*, snapped by Marella Agnelli for the April 15, 1967, *Vogue*.

Julianne Moore

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 216 parent, as a person—what is this? Hannibal is the dark side that is part of everyone, the id that you let go. He's evil unchanneled. We are socialized, civilized, but in our fantasy lives we explore those themes. That's O.K., but it's a fine line I feel uncomfortable with. I don't want to sound as if I'm sitting here rationalizing violence."

But the story's black humor proves irresistible; suppressing a grin, she adds sheepishly, "Tony never eats anybody who's good."

At the moment she herself is eating oatmeal, always a safer choice than the brains of a Justice Department official. Having breakfast in her neighborhood hangout, the downtown Manhattan bistro Pastis, Moore doesn't look a bit like an uptight F.B.I. agent, anyway. She and Freundlich and their three-year-old son, Caleb, live nearby in a West Village loft, and Moore herself seems a typical denizen of the neighborhood. Her beauty is quiet and versatile; sitting in a corner, wearing no discernible makeup and clad in a caramel-colored pashmina and old olive-green jeans that match her eyes, she is quite inconspicuous. But doll her up—as, for example, the russet-haired wife whose prim chignon and tailored 40s suits belie her wantonness in *The End of the Affair*—and Moore becomes a startling head turner.

Although she has lost out on some roles because she was deemed not beautiful enough, she has been denied others for the opposite reason. "I saw her for *The Player,* but she was too beautiful for the part," says the legendary director Robert Altman. "She was supposed to be a little on the plain side, and I didn't think we'd ever arrive at that. But she's the best. She did *Cookie's Fortune* and *Short Cuts* with me, and I've offered her parts she's gracefully turned down. Every time I do something, she passes through my mind. I think she's getting better every time I've seen her. She's one of my favorite people."

However men judge her appearance at any given moment, Moore is a serious actress, and she has long made it a policy not to worry about her status as a sex object. "In the business I'm in, you're never pretty enough, so you just have to kind of let it go," she says.

Besides, she has better things to think about—so much so that even turning 40 last December seemed no big deal. If major milestones are the time to take stock, Moore is scoring off the charts these days.

"My family's wonderful; I have a great child, a good relationship, and my career's in good shape," she says with modest understatement. The truth is she doesn't have a free moment. Having finished Freundlich's next movie, *World Traveler,* in which she co-stars with Billy Crudup, Moore goes on to film Michael Cunningham's Pulitzer Prize–winning novel, *The Hours,* with Nicole Kidman and Meryl Streep. Then comes another film version of a Pulitzer Prize winner, Lasse Hallström's movie of Annie Proulx's *The Shipping News,* with Kevin Spacey. *Evolution,* an Ivan Reitman film in which Moore co-stars with David Duchovny, comes out this summer.

With all that going on, what's a little thing like a 40th birthday? Moore concedes that it might have been traumatic under other circumstances. "I think if I didn't have a child I would die," she says. But given the richness of her current life, both professionally and personally, it's a lot easier to keep aging in perspective.

In fact, while moviemakers throughout the industry are rushing to complete their projects before the anticipated strike this spring, Moore could use a hiatus. "I want to have another baby," she says. And left to her own devices, she isn't likely to make room on her crowded schedule. "She's a workaholic, and an hysteric too," says her close friend, the actress Ellen Barkin, laughing. "She is always hysterical about the fact that she will never work again. She really thinks nobody's going to hire her. I used to never even notice I was out of work until about month 10, but she gets very nervous when she's unemployed; she really thinks that she's not going to be able to support herself. Even after two Academy Award nominations and five movies in a row—I looked at her and said, 'Well, are you O.K. now, Jule?' She said, 'Well—no.'"

Although it can be inconvenient, Moore's boyfriend says he understands her driveness: "We always have fights about her working too much. I want her to work less, because I want her to be around more. But she's an artist, and I understand the torment you go through, and the need to express yourself in that way."

While it has already produced two cinematic collaborations and one baby, Moore's association with Freundlich initially seemed anything but fruitful. "We had a disastrous first meeting," recalls Moore, who had just ended an unhappy eight-year marriage to actor John Gould Rubin. "I was at a really bad time in my life; I was trying to get my divorce finalized, and I had had a series of bad romances. My car was in the shop, and I showed up half an hour late to this meeting. I said, 'Why do you want me to do this movie?'" Her tone rude and accusatory, she scowls to show how unpleasant she must have seemed. "I was awful and abrupt, but Bart was great. He said these wonderful thing he was very clear about why he want me to do it, and what I brought to it em tionally."

Freundlich, who both wrote and dire ed *The Myth of Fingerprints,* may ha seemed self-possessed, but he was actua racked with nerves. "Out of all the actor saw, she was the only person I was scar to meet, because I wanted her for t movie so badly," says the director, who al cast Noah Wyle, Blythe Danner, and R Scheider in the film. "I felt so much was stake if she said no. I thought of her someone who could totally transfor without putting on a fancy wardrobe to it. It would all happen in her face. The r was a very angry person, and I thought Julie as someone who lent humanity everything she did. She certainly didn't s away from complexity. When she told yes, I remember doing a Julianne Mo acceptance dance on my stairs, up a down the stairs sideways like an old-tim musical."

No sooner had shooting begun th Moore and Freundlich found themsel sliding into an affair. "I had no designs a relationship with her," Freundlich insis "I hadn't even had that fantasy; I was ju so awed by the potential of working w her. Getting involved wasn't something thought about till the end of the first wee shooting. But there was just a spark b tween us. I remember looking at myself the mirror and thinking, Don't even *thi* about doing this!"

Moore was even more astonished. thought, I can't believe I'm having an aff with this guy on his first film!" she exclai She kept calling Ellen Barkin for wh pered consultations, but she ignored h friend's advice. "I told her, 'Leave h alone! It's his first movie. You'll be able do this, but he won't,'" Barkin reports. "B Bart is very mature. He's a great guy, ve smart and very funny. And she certai doesn't push him around. It's hard to s who the stronger is."

So was Moore the instigator? "It w pretty mutual, but I guess I was the aggr sor," she says. "He was busy directing movie." She giggles. "I was distracting hi

Then there was the nine-year age diff ence between them. "She told me she w 19," Freundlich jokes.

For Moore, "it was a huge issue," s says. "He was 26, and I was 35! I could believe it was happening. But he seem much older than his years, and age eva rated over time."

Since then, she says, "everything's be good. I've never been happier. Bart and C are the best things that ever happened me. The great thing about having a child

at it makes you finally an adult. I don't nk you get there without a child. If you're ıdy, it's a great, solid feeling."

And if you're not ready? That possibility suggested by Freundlich's *World Traveler,* which a man abandons his wife and child ı his son's third birthday, with Moore aying a drifter he picks up in a bar. "We ake jokes about wearing T-shirts on the ess junket saying, THIS IS NOT ABOUT US!" oore reports. That hasn't deterred the ısing; Billy Crudup, who plays the errant ısband and is also one of Freundlich's ɔsest friends, claims his own T-shirt will ad, WHO'S IT ABOUT, THEN?

Happily enmeshed though they may be, Moore and Freundlich still haven't got- ı around to legal wedlock. "It's not like n afraid of marriage or anything," she ys. "I think we might get married some- y, but there's been less thought than you ɔuld imagine. Initially we were just dealing th having a child and moving to New ɔrk; we were just dealing with one thing at time. Now I have a son with this man, so I ve a relationship with this man for the rest my life. That to me just seemed much gger than the question of marriage. And ıen you get married in a civil ceremony, ɔu're promising to the United States of merica that you'll stay married. That to me the tough part. My relationship with Bart private; it's personal. We have a child, and that way we'll be together forever. It's a uch more unbreakable bond than anything e government could create. And there's ımething I really like about being allied ith a person freely. I like the fact that every ıy I'm in this because I've chosen to be, ıd that he's there because he wants to be." ıe stops and gives a what-can-I-say kind of ırug. "We're very happy."

The only problem she can think of is the latively trivial question of what to call ıch other. "It does feel a little stupid calling art 'my boyfriend,'" she admits. "But when say, 'Cal's dad,' people think we're not gether."

Freundlich seems equally relaxed about ıeir status. "The force of this relationship ıd the speed at which it exists have some- ɔw taken the burden off thinking too much ɔout the future," he says airily.

More difficult is balancing their respon- bilities in the present. So far, with Cal only toddler, Moore has been able to take him ith her on location. "Cal went everywhere ith me, and Bart comes and goes," she ys. "He'd stay for as long as he could, but s hard."

But she is careful not to overdramatize ıe difficulties of juggling career and fami- '. "Why should I be different from any ther mother?" she says. "It sucks, but it's hat we all do."

Although many actors thrive on travel, Moore dislikes the constant upheaval required by her profession. "I hate change. I'm not restless at all. I'll just dig myself a trench and stay there. All I want is routine. When I pack I get into a panic; my heart starts pounding and everything."

It might thus seem odd that she has chosen an unpredictable career demanding frequent moves, but Moore is only replicating the peripatetic nature of her childhood. She was born Julie Smith, the daughter of a military judge and his childhood sweetheart, a Scotswoman who later became a psychiatric social worker. The family was constantly uprooted; Julie—the first of three children—grew up in Alabama, Georgia, Texas, Virginia, New Jersey, Nebraska, Alaska, New York, Panama, and Germany, where she spent her high-school years. "I wouldn't give up what I experienced, because I got so much out of it, but it is hard," she says. "I don't want to do it to my kid. But it certainly made me more worldly, and it gives you an adaptability. There's a whole world out there, and things can change according to how you're viewed."

As a youngster, Julie was a bookworm: "Reading was the thing I relied on, the thing that carried me through." But in the middle of high school, she underwent a metamorphosis. "I was a really smart kid; I wore glasses and was very thin. I was one of the kids nobody noticed. But then we moved to Germany, and over the summer I had a big transformation. I cut my hair and got contact lenses, and when I arrived they thought I was pretty. Not a lot had changed physically; it was about perception. People were suddenly much nicer to me. It was shocking, emotionally."

The change was a surprise to her family as well. When Julie was 15, she landed the role of Sleeping Beauty in a school play. "My sister says that my mother looked at my father during the play and said, 'Oh my god, Peter—she's *pretty!*'" Moore says wryly. Her mother, a beauty herself, apparently hadn't considered the possibility that Julie might become one as well.

To her, acting seemed a logical extension of her passion for reading. "In high school, acting is about the geekiest thing you can do," says Moore. "But when I read books, I felt like I could hear things—the cadence of a voice. I never thought about acting as a career—that was not something my parents felt was a profession. But I had an English teacher in high school who was very ambitious for her students, and she's the one who said to me, 'I think you could do this for a living.' I went home and said to my parents, 'I want to be an actor.' They just about died, they were so disappointed. My mother said to me, 'Why waste your brain?'"

But Julie prevailed, heading for Boston University to study acting (a compromise choice, since her parents insisted she not go to a conservatory, but rather to a university where she would earn an academic degree). All those years as a bookworm paid off, however; Moore attributes much of her success to being "a really good reader. That's been my strength: I can pick a script."

Having learned that she could re-create herself, Julie re-created her name as well, taking her father's middle name, Moore, and tacking on her mother's first name, Anne, to her own—"so I don't hurt anybody's feelings," she says.

Whatever discomfort is caused by the life she has chosen, she figures it's probably a good thing that her profession counterbalances her natural tendency toward stasis. "There's a lot of tension within my life, but sometimes that's a beneficial way to live," she muses. "When there's tension between what is most comfortable and what is more challenging to you, then you'll learn something. But usually there's some fear involved in getting out of the trench."

Moore has always struggled with her fears; this is not a woman who dives out of airplanes or goes in for extreme sports. "I'm a huge physical coward," she admits. "I didn't learn to swim until I was 26, or to drive until I was 27. I'm afraid of balls; I just want to get out of the way. When I'm acting and I've had to do physical things, I go into a fugue state, and I can do it. But I have no fear emotionally. I am an emotional thrill seeker. When I do that stuff, it's exciting to me; I love that sensation. If there's something that makes me tremendously fearful, generally there's something I'm going to gain. There's a sense of real satisfaction when I've completed it."

But for all the rewards of work well done, Moore says that nothing can compare with the joy of having her child. "It was the biggest emotional thrill I've had in my life," she says. "The best day of my life was the day he was born. I was on an incredible high that lasted the whole first year; I was euphoric. I wasn't prepared for how happy it would make me—for the depth of my happiness. There's nothing better than choosing to be a parent."

Moore feels so strongly about that choice that she has started working with Planned Parenthood. "Abortion has been safe and legal for 28 years, and there's a whole generation of girls who don't know their reproductive rights are threatened," she says. "It's time to be vocal about it."

"The last two years have been the busiest of her acting career, but she cares deeply

Julianne Moore

about these issues, and she always tries to make time," says Caren Spruch, director of special projects at the Planned Parenthood Federation of America. "She's very smart, she follows up immediately, and she's extremely committed."

Planning another child is one of Moore's top priorities at the moment. "I want to take a year and have my baby," she says. But not quite yet; the first half of this year is already spoken for. "This stupid strike," she says with a sigh. "What I'm doing between now and June 1 is absolutely insane. If it weren't for the strike, I would never be doing it. The next six months are going to be absolutely dreadful."

After that, the idea is to rent a house for the summer and relax. But the minute the strike question is resolved, it will be hard to fend off all the offers that are sure to follow. A recent survey of the busiest screen actors of the 1990s ranked Moore in 11th place alongside Robert De Niro, each having made 24 movies during t decade (as compared with chart topp Samuel L. Jackson, who made 36). In t last three years, however, Moore has ma so many films that her numbers are mou ing fast, and an Oscar seems only a mat of time.

"You hear people say, 'Talent will w out,' but I think it's not true," Moore sa "I know too many people who are rea talented who are having a hard time. I been really lucky." She smiles. "I'm the lu iest girl in the world." □

Libet Johnson

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 222 who did meet him, and very young. "He looked like Napoleon, with a chiseled face," this person recalls. In fact, at Johnson's Halloween party several years ago, the chauffeur dressed as Napoleon, and she appeared as Josephine. Around New York society, he was introduced discreetly as "Jerome Jeandin of Paris."

Johnson dated him in the mid-90s. "I heard all about the chauffeur from her," says one man. "She had a big crush on him for a while." The story, much repeated in society, was that when Johnson flew Jeandin to the U.S. on the Concorde he was upset at being seated in the back of the plane. "He thought there was tourist class on the Concorde," a friend told *W,* "laughing uproariously," according to the magazine. It is said that when the couple broke up she gave him a Ferrari.

Still, "no one laughs at her," says a man in her social circle. "She is above scandal. Of course, there are limits," he says. "But the chauffeur was O.K. He was *French,* darling."

Over the years there have been many men in Johnson's life. "She had the chauffeur and the guy who did the horses, a lot of people who weren't from her background," says a woman who has known her for close to a decade. "I can't keep track of them. There were quite a few." After Jeandin, Johnson was reportedly involved with the actor Michael Nouri, whose biggest hit was the 1983 movie *Flashdance,* and in 1998 she was romantically linked with singer Michael Bolton. There was also Alvaro Talayero, a handsome Venezuelan heir some 20 years her junior. "Alvaro likes older women," says a friend of his. "When he was 20 he had a girl who was 30." Johnson wooed him intensely, "giving him presents every five minutes," says a friend.

Presents aside, Johnson was also, without a doubt, fun to be with. In 1996, while traveling in Russia with Talayero, she took the controls of a MiG-29 jetfighter. "I expected just to be a passenger," she told *W,* "but when we got up in the air, [the pilot] said, 'OK, push your stick to the left,' and we did a roll. Then we did a *double* roll.... We felt so lucky to have this incredible—transcendental—experience. When we landed, we had the same thought that a lot of people had: 'How much for one of these things?'"

"When Libet was with Alvaro she went around with all his friends," says a man who knows Talayero. "For her it was very flattering that one of her young lovers was rich," obviously not dating her for her money. But another acquaintance disagrees: "Libet likes good-looking men. She doesn't care about money. She likes men who are *fun.*"

Johnson's five husbands, people say, were also fun. Christopher Kennan, the diplomat George Kennan's son, whom she married in 1990 and separated from four years later, "was a biker who'd go off on trails," one socialite recalls. John Teal flew his own plane. Jamie Whitall, whom she was married to some 20 years ago, was "a really *nice* man," says a friend of Johnson's, "and *very* good-looking."

"I think the feeling in our family is that being married a few times to men who worked [was] a kind of lonely existence for a rich woman," says a relative.

Johnson had four children with four of her husbands; they now range in age from about 10 to 20 years. "A friend of mine who lived in the River House [the exclusive East Side Manhattan co-op where Johnson had a $12 million apartment] used to joke that there were *so* many names on her mailbox," says one woman.

"I think she goes through *eras* with men," says another woman who knows her. "And these eras are accompanied by a change of style, milieu, and homes." When the marriages ended, it is said, each husband left with a generous settlement. "They've gotten millions," says a financier who knows several of Johnson's exes. "The word was that Kennan got $7 million and Teal got $5 million."

"*Socialites* are who they are because of the men they sleep with," says a man in Johnson's social crowd. "When you are an *heiress,* the man on your arm accompan *you.*.... Libet Johnson is not *obliged.* If s doesn't like a man, she throws him o '*Bye!* I don't love you anymore.'"

"She is behaving in a very emancipat way. She doesn't care," says a woman w knows her. "She is basically doing what j about every rich man does."

But it's not as easy for a woman to be wealthy as Libet Johnson.

"I think that beneath this nice person this really lost soul," says a friend of one Johnson's exes. "At 40, Libet was living the River House in the grandest fashion. was so over-the-top and she didn't even re ize it," he says. "If you can buy a jet or whim, it's very separating from people. H do you think it affects guys? Either th suck up because they want her money or they are self-respecting, they don't want a thing to do with it. You look at the rea rich women, you'll find that most eith have horrible relationships or are married very weak men." Johnson "desperately wa to be in love all the time," this man says. think she had such a screwed-up time gro ing up, anyone who pays attention to h she loves."

Elizabeth Ross Johnson was born 1950, the third of Robert Wood Joh son Jr. and Betty Wold Johnson's five c dren, and their only daughter. She grew surrounded by fantastic wealth in New J sey, where most of the sprawling Johns clan lived and where Johnson & Johns was headquartered. The giant pharmaceu cal company—which introduced the Ba Aid and sterile bandages, among oth innovations—was founded by Libet's gre grandfather Robert Wood Johnson and brothers James and Edward in 1887. Fr 1932 until his retirement in 1963, the co pany was run extremely profitably and w an iron hand by Libet's formidable gra father, Robert Wood junior, also known the General.

A tough, cruel man who was marri three times, he was at his most savage w his only son, Libet's father. A gentle man,

accounts, who eventually developed alcohol problem, Robert junior (the neral had dropped the "Jr." after his fa- r died) started working at Johnson & hnson in 1941 and eventually rose to sident of domestic operations. In 1965 father had him thrown out of the com- ny by Libet's great-uncle Seward. "Uncle b resented and disliked his son and he lly did his best to destroy him," Mary a Johnson, his cousin, told the author rbara Goldsmith for her 1987 book, *nson v. Johnson*. "Cousin Bob was asked leave," Mary Lea said. "He wasn't given notice. He came back to the company next day and found all his files out in hall and everything torn apart.... It s a very cruel thing to do."

Libet was 14 when her father left John- & Johnson. "After it happened, peo- we'd known all our es would turn away. guess I don't blame m—it was a company vn ... but it was hard," et's mother, Betty Wold hnson Bushnell, told ldsmith. Humiliated and Robert junior moved family to Florida and ed to start a new busi- ss. "He was almost too k to function," a cousin id. "But he kept hanging there, hoping he could ove himself." He died five ars later, of cancer. Five ars after that, in 1975, two Libet's brothers died—Billy a motorcycle accident, ith of a drug overdose. "It is a terrible thing for their other, she lost a husband ... and then her o sons," Libet's cousin Eric Ryan has said. hen her brothers died, their share of the hnson & Johnson inheritance—along with at they had already received from their ther—passed to Libet and her surviving others, Woody and Christopher. "My gosh, ey must practically be billionaires at this age of the game," Mary Lea told Gold- ith back in the 80s.

ooking at photographs of Libet Johnson with Frédéric Fekkai, one gets the sense at she might really be happy. One shot in rticular suggests that maybe this most un- ely of unions could work: dark and rather otic-looking, Fekkai, in a tuxedo, stands xt to Libet, wearing a blue strapless ball wn and a long black Cruella De Vil wig ith a white streak in it. Both are laughing. "I ink it's *terrific* if it works," says a promi- nt socialite. "I think he cares for her," says friend of Fekkai's. "He's quite successful, he's t money in his own right. So a lot of people are saying it's a good relationship." Says an acquaintance of Johnson's, "Among the men she's been with, I bet Frédéric Fekkai is the most stable and probably the most shrewd. He's incredibly ambitious, not in a bad way, but very ambitious. He's got all these plans to build a big empire. I think it's very Jamesian. The American heiress, and he ... where is *he* from?"

Johnson and Fekkai began dating in October 1999. Before that, he cut her hair, at his salon on 57th Street. Fekkai has become famous over the last decade, styling the hair of such society women as Anne Bass, Nan Kempner, and Betsy Bloomingdale, and movie stars such as Salma Hayek and Kristin Scott Thomas—and even Hillary Clinton. Part French, part Vietnamese, part Egyptian, Fekkai grew up in Provence and came to the United States some 17 years ago. After working for the now defunct Bruno Dessange salon on Madison Avenue, Fekkai quickly shot up the hairdressing ranks to run his own salon at Bergdorf Goodman at age 29. In 1995, he went into partnership with Chanel, and today his business includes salons in New York and Beverly Hills and two boutiques, in Manhattan and Short Hills, New Jersey, that sell his new line of accessories for women, including hair clips, handbags, and sunglasses. "You know, I believe very strongly that it doesn't stop at hairstyle or makeup. It's about the total look. It's a makeover altogether, every day," Fekkai said on the CBS *Early Show* in October. "If you know about nature, if you know about architecture, if you know about trees, and if you ... respect all these things, you get great style."



ALWAYS A BRIDE

Left, husband number five, Christopher Kennan, with Johnson, 1990. Their marriage lasted about four years. *Right,* Johnson and a former boyfriend, actor Michael Nouri, 1998. "Libet," says an acquaintance, "likes good-looking men. She doesn't care about money. She likes men who are *fun*."

"He's amazing with women," says a rival stylist. "He's got them eating out of the palm of his hand. He's charming. 'Charming' would be a key word to describe him." For the past several years, Fekkai, who is in the process of getting divorced from model turned art consultant Elizabeth Shiell-Fekkai, has been a favorite with society women, not just in his salon, but also at their parties. "He's cute, amusing, and straight, which is staggering for a hairdresser, quite like the movie *Shampoo.* He knows all the ladies. They adore him and treat him as one of their own," says a society decorator.

But evidently none of these women is as much fun as Libet Johnson. "The wealth is mind-boggling. Of course, it's part of the package from Frédéric's point of view," says a friend of both Johnson and Fekkai. And it has changed Fekkai's life. These days, friends say, Fekkai spends weekends at the Millbrook estate and goes to Vail on ski holidays. "They go on Libet's plane," says a friend of Fekkai's. For Fekkai, "someone who has always battled for his money," says a friend, "to have money thrown at your feet is bound to be heady."

In the past, friends say, Johnson has always been the one in control in her relationships with men. Some friends of Fekkai's sense that this is still the case. "I think that she is draining his energy. She is a force greater than he is," one friend worries. "It's like a cage for Frédéric." But other people see it differently. One reason the current relationship could work, an acquaintance says, is that Fekkai "is himself controlling when it comes to women. He's used to dealing with rich, insecure women." Each has the potential to remake the other, says one woman. "I think *he* is the Henry Higgins," she says. "Well, *Henri* Higgins."

Now that Johnson and Fekkai are living together, and searching for a new home, the betting is on as to whether they will get married when his divorce comes through. Based on Johnson's past, the odds, some say, are pretty good. "Honey, horses for courses. Hell, she's done it five times before. Why not do it again?" says one friend of the couple's. And, indeed, why not? "Frédéric's handsome, he's fun, he likes to travel. He speaks *French,*" says an acquaintance. "My sense," says a friend of Johnson's, "is that the one man who can rein Libet in and give her a more defined life is Frédéric Fekkai and that Libet is his ultimate client. This may be the consultation of a lifetime."

Jeff Koons

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 234 everything he'd done. Weekends, Jeff's proud dad would take him along to work, where Jeff pitched in at the store, or helped out on house calls to the wealthier clients, or at least acted as though he were doing these things until he was old enough to really contribute. This introduction to the world of appearances left a deep impression. As Jeff remembers it, "The furniture store really seemed like theater. It was like a stage set, because it was always changing. I realized that through different aesthetic choices my emotions would be affected. If I would go into one room and there would be red carpeting and a dark couch, it would create one kind of atmosphere, and then if I'd go back the next week and there'd be a gold-and-turquoise setup, the feelings would be completely different. I enjoyed that." The store would also become Jeff's first art gallery. When he was about eight he painted copies of old masters and signed them "Jeffrey Koons." He made this Duchampian move without knowing anything about art history, and his dad recognized a good thing. He put the paintings in the windows of the store. Soon they were selling for as much as a few hundred dollars each.

There was never any question about whether Jeff would go to art school, and after graduating from high school in 1972 he chose the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore. It was during his first year there that he finagled an appointment with one of his art heroes, Salvador Dalí. There weren't many art books in the Koons household when Jeff was growing up, but Dalí was among the handful of artists whose work made it onto the coffee table. One might even say that he was Jeff's first role model. In any case, Koons had read in the local papers that the older artist, then 68, was in New York, staying, as he always did, at the St. Regis. Koons rang him up. Dalí—possibly the most narcissistic artist to have ever existed, although he's had a lot of competition—must have been happy to hear from a young fan, no doubt one who flattered him, because the painter invited Jeff to come up and meet him. The following Saturday, Koons took the train to New York, and, at least for the budding artist, the meeting at the hotel was a hit. The mustachioed Dalí was dolled up in his drama-queen cape, with a young trophy blonde on his arm; Jeff was decked out in his Sunday best—it's a threesome I would love to have witnessed. They got along so well that they moved on to the Upper East Side's M. Knoedler and Co. gallery, where a show of Dalí's had just opened. It was only when Jeff started to take too long with the photos he was snapping of Dalí (which he still keeps in his studio) that the big-shot artist decided enough was enough. "He was saying, 'Hurry up, kid. I can't hold this pose all day,'" Koons remembers. But Jeff went back to Baltimore that night with big dreams.

At college, Jeff definitely got himself noticed. Paschke, his teacher-hero, remembers, "He had a disarming way about him that has allowed him to network in a very effective way, but aside from all those personal skills, he had abilities as an artist." Koons's paintings and drawings from that time, figurative works that incorporated religious iconography, tied into not only art history but what he saw around him, including the local bars and strip joints that Paschke would take him to. "There was a certain edge about the work," the older artist recalls. "I think it attempted to tap into the relationship between spirituality and the carnal aspect of t human spirit."

After college, which included an change year at the Art Institute Chicago where he met Paschke Koo moved to New York City. This was 19 Within two weeks he got a job at the M seum of Modern Art. Lots of artists wo in museums, particularly when they st out—it's almost an initiation rite, and t list of artists who have worked at MoM reads like a Who's Who. But the few yea that Koons spent manning the Moder membership desk in its front lobby ha become legendary. Koons relished his teractions with the public and the opp tunities to get visitors excited by art. was a kind of half performance artist, h salesman, and he invented all sorts getups to attract customers. He dyed hair red and would often cultivate a pen mustache, after Dalí. His inventory of o fits included paper bibs, loud polka-d shirts, a double tie that he'd match with sequined jacket. One of his favorite acc sories was an inflatable flower—the ki that you buy at a toy store or variety sh He'd wrap it around his neck, and it tracted people like a magnet. This infl able was actually related to the art proj that Jeff was working on in his two-ro apartment on East Fourth Street. In t playfully subversive spirit of Marcel D champ, who had turned everyday obje such as urinals into art pieces (which he called readymades), Koons was experimenting with all sorts



1980

"THE NEW" SERIES

New Hoover Convertibles, Green, Red, Brown, New Hoover Deluxe Shampoo Polishers, Yellow, Brown Doubledecker (appliances, Plexiglas, fluorescent lights).



1985

"EQUILIBRIUM" SERIES

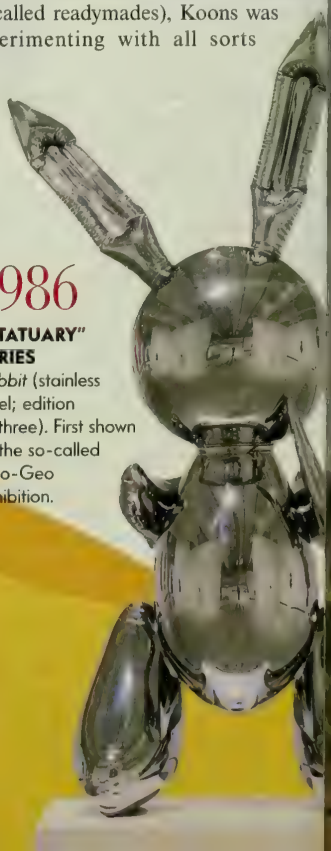
One Ball Total Equilibrium Tank (glass, steel, sodium chloride reagent, distilled water, basketball).



1986

"LUXURY AND DEGRADATION" SERIES

Travel Bar (stainless steel; edition of three).



1986

"STATUARY" SERIES

Rabbit (stainless steel; edition of three). First shown at the so-called Neo-Geo exhibition.

store-bought colored inflatable flowers l inflatable bunnies, combining them with stic, Plexiglas, and mirrors to create what now considered his earliest serious artrks.

These lowly inflatables would eventually d to some of Koons's most brilliant, iconvork—and they also helped him stand out is job at the Modern. But while his sales niques may have been popular with the blic, they weren't a hit with everyone. Wiln Rubin, then the chief curator, who had rmous power at the institution, was one son who could have lived without the b Hope–like entertainment factor that ons was bringing to the serious matter of appreciation. Koons says that on a num· of occasions, when visiting dignitaries e expected at the museum, the museum's ector, Richard Oldenburg, had the task of ng Koons to beat it. "He was always very e about it," Koons remembers. "He'd say nething like 'Jeff, we really appreciate at you're doing, but we wonder if you'd ld not coming into work just for tomorv.'" While Oldenburg doesn't remember ing to ask Koons to leave, he does recall n fondly, and remembers that, despite ispers of Koons's flamboyance, he sold e times as many memberships as any ier sales person.

Plenty of others who watched what went at that desk could tell that Koons had a future, and he had no shortage of job ers, especially in sales. One of these offers ped give Koons the courage finally to ve the museum in 1980, when he was 25. got himself licensed to sell mutual funds d stocks, began working at First Investors rporation, and was thus able to finance first breakthrough pieces, which inlved household appliances and lights. ese works—displaying a fantastic variety vacuum cleaners and shampoo polishers, always presented in clear Plexiglas containers and illuminated by industrial fluorescent lights—ultimately occupied Koons's attention for the next six or seven years. These pieces work by giving the viewer a series of shocks—the shock, say, that vacuum cleaners have been recontextualized as art, and the shock that they look so beautiful. (These aren't just any appliances, but the visual caviar of vacuum cleaners and shampoo polishers—Hoover Deluxes, Hoover Celebrities, and Shelton Wet-Dries, among other brands, all gorgeous examples of design and craftsmanship.) To many observers, these impeccably packaged sculptures, glowingly lit to suggest an aura of holiness, are like shrines to the gods of American consumerism, and a comment on our love of the new. Some take that to mean Koons is being ironic about our culture, even cynical. Actually, though, when one talks to Koons about this work it gets much more interesting and personal—Freud would have a field day with the artist's interpretations of the sexual identities of these objects. "The sexuality sometimes goes back and forth," he told me recently. "I can look at an upright Hoover Convertible and think of it as being masculine because of the handle. A moment later, I can look at the same vacuum cleaner and read it as feminine because of the womblike quality of the bag. This type of duality is also stated in the Shelton vacuum cleaner, which has written on its side WET-DRY."

By 1980, some positive critical response to the vacuum-cleaner pieces, including a mention in *Artforum,* the magazine that I edited in the 80s, had helped secure him a window installation at the New Museum of Contemporary Art, as well as given him a presence in a variety of group shows. But he was having a harder time getting a dealer to make a commitment to him. When Koons told Mary Boone—who was showing many of the decade's new art stars, such as David Salle and Julian Schnabel—that he wasn't going to stick around and wait for her to give him his first exhibition, she said, "Good." Another powerful dealer offered to try out one of his vacuum pieces in her home; the next day she told him to come and cart it away. Making the piece had taken every cent he had. Evicted from his apartment and broke from spending all his earnings on his art (fancy European vacuum cleaners cost quite a bit more than, say, oil paints and canvas), Koons feared his career was over.

But after a summer respite with Mom and Dad, who had moved to Sarasota, Florida (Koons took on a brief job there as a political canvasser), he returned to New York, now 27, determined that this time he was going to make it. Thanks in part to the contacts he'd made at the Modern, he found a new career on Wall Street as a commodities broker, first at Clayton Brokerage Corporation and then at Smith Barney. (He recently told me that he liked selling cotton commodities the most. When I asked why, he said it was because he is an artist and cotton is soft.) There is no doubt these experiences helped Koons hone his skills as a salesman. He needed to earn well too because he had fixated on a new, even more expensive idea for his art.

The series of works he eventually created is titled "Equilibrium." It has all the multiple layers—psychological, social, physical, sexual, and art-historical—that inform Koons's greatest works. There are bronzes—of a life jacket, for example—in the series that refer to the art of Jasper Johns, especially to his famous bronze beer



1988

ANALITY" SERIES
ichael Jackson and Bubbles
eramic; edition of three).
f this series Koons has said,
was telling the Bourgeois
embrace the things
at it likes."



1992

PUPPY
(Live flowers, earth, wood, steel.) This 40-foot-high sculpture is seen here at its installation in Germany. It has also been shown in Spain and in New York.



1991

"MADE IN HEAVEN" SERIES
Hand on Breast (oil inks on canvas). A self-portrait of Koons and his then wife, the Italian porn star Ilona Staller.

2000

"CELEBRATION" SERIES
Balloon Dog (begun in 1994; stainless steel with transparent color coating). Seen in London.



cans. There are photo-based pieces that play on the influence of advertising and sports iconography, especially the publicity campaigns of Nike. But the most famous works in the series, basketballs suspended in perfect equipoise in aquariums, are what really stand out as original. The artist had become so obsessed with figuring out how to pull this idea off—it proved to be quite a technically complicated feat to suspend a basketball in a tank of distilled water—that he was spending a lot of time at work on Wall Street on the phone with scientists he thought could advise him. He finally tracked down Dr. Richard P. Feynman, a Nobel Prize winner in physics, who pushed him toward a solution, helping out with the science of density gradients. (The trick is that you have to make the basketball too light to sink and too heavy to rise. The solution, to vastly oversimplify, involved filling the ball itself with water and then layering the bottom two-thirds of the tank with saltwater and the top third with pure water. For all that, the suspension lasts only about six months; collectors need to have the pieces serially re-installed, for which Koons provides a video and manual.) As metaphors for life these works have infinite power, from the way they evoke the goal of staying in balance to the way they embody a desire for immortality. And the choice of a basketball in a tank to convey this message is pure Koons. It's interesting to look at Damien Hirst's famous formaldehyde tanks in the context of this work, and almost impossible to miss how Koons influenced his younger British colleague.

Some critics were appalled when Charles Saatchi, one of the most important collectors of American art at the time, paid $75,000 for a Koons work—a stainless-steel bourbon train—from a subsequent show held in 1986 at International with Monument, an artist-run gallery that was the "it" place that year. It was only a matter of time before Koons would end up in one of the big-league galleries, and this finally happened when he joined in a group show with three other young artists—Peter Halley, Ashley Bickerton, and Meyer Vaisman—at Sonnabend in the fall of 1986. The exhibition became the only subject in the art world for a minute. (It was somewhat misleadingly referred to as the Neo-Geo show, because of Halley's geometric abstractions.) All four artists were very much of the moment; their art had an intellectuality and a sense of cool that were in obvious contrast to the Neo-Expressionism of people such as Schnabel, Salle, Anselm Kiefer, and Sigmar Polke that had come before it. Koons's contribution to the show included a stainless-steel bouquet of flowers, and busts, also in stainless steel, of Louis XIV and Bob Hope. But the piece that grabbed the spotlight was *Rabbit,* his flawless stainless-steel casting of an inflatable bunny. It was a 41-inch-high art-bomb that thumbed its nose at the aesthetics of high art and yet at the same time embraced them, a fusion of Pop and Brancusi. With its wit, its physical simplicity, and its characteristically Koonsian reference to sexual symbols and childhood pleasures, *Rabbit* has become one of the artist's most famous and enduring icons. He would say at the time, "I'm making some of the greatest art being made now. It'll take the art world 10 years to get around to it. In this century there was Picasso and Duchamp. Now I'm taking us out of the 20th century." Not the kind of modesty that wins a guy friends. (It's fascinating how Koons's appropriation of the flat Warholian statement began as something that could seem very arrogant and has more recently developed into a paradigm of humility.)

But even with the puffed-up claims, he earned the respect of some major players in the contemporary art world. All over town, arguments were being waged about Koons and his work in a way that happens only when something truly audacious and brilliant occurs in art. For some time he had gone beyond simply appropriating the ready-made icon; he was now performing acts of transformation and transcendence. Kurt Varnedoe, today the chief curator of painting and sculpture at the Museum of Modern Art, is one of many viewers who stayed put when he saw that silver bunny. He recalls, "There are just a few occasions in my art experience in New York where I've been sort of knocked dead by an object instantly. This piece was just riveting. You wanted to laugh, you were shocked, you were planted to the floor. I was galvanized by the object. It has such an amazing physical presence. The swollen nature of it, the preternaturally round head and bulging seams of it, give it a kind of compressed and packed energy you feel instantly when you're in the presence of it. 'Uncanny' is the word that comes to mind. There were so many different things going on at once in the piece. It was hilarious, it was smart, and it was chilling. When I looked at the head of the bunny, I thought of the photograph of Neil Armstrong on the moon, with the big, round, reflecting visor. It had that kind of Utopian high-gloss modern clarity to it."

The financial history of that little bunny is its own incredible tale. As is typical, Koons usually fabricates his sculpture in editions of three, plus one artist's proof. After the show, one bunny went to Ileana Sonnabend, one went to Charles Saatchi, and the third was bought by Terry Winters, a painter who liked the piece and who a shows at the gallery. Koons kept the arti proof (until he had to sell it because mounting debts). Sonnabend and Anto Homem, director of the gallery, remem counseling Winters that, with a $40,0 price tag, the piece was a good investm It eventually sold to S. I. Newhouse and now that he has promised the piec the Modern as a gift, it is one of the mu um's most prized objects. At "Open End the final cycle of MoMA's millennial e bitions, the sculpture had a place of ho in an exhibition that included works Koons's heroes Warhol and Lichtenst Meanwhile, the other steel bunnies among the most sought-after artworks our time. Sonnabend says she could ne sell hers—it would probably go for betw two and three million and counting—cause so many collectors have asked her it that she'd end up infuriating many them; she discusses the piece with such fection that she might just take it with h

At any rate, soon after Koons pulled rabbit out of his hat he became an cial artist in the Sonnabend stable. The d er says some people were aghast that gallery, which had such a solid reputat for serious contemporary art, represent the likes of Robert Rauschenberg and Rob Morris, would consider hooking up w Koons. When he unveiled his next New Y show in 1988, neither those who loved work nor those who thought it represen the end of civilization were disappoint For this exhibition, Koons had switch from stainless steel to ceramic, wood, porcelain and titled his new group of wo "Banality." True to his word, he started v a group of icons one would more likely f in a tchotchkes shop or at a rummage than poised to enter the canon of high In a porcelain sculpture decorated w gold leaf, Michael Jackson, one of Koo favorite pop icons, holds his chimpan Bubbles, the singer's legs stretched as i were an odalisque; one of the shocks set by this piece is the fact that Koons has d his own plastic surgery on Jackson Bubbles, turning them snow white. (At time, the real-life Jackson's complexion lightened only as far as café au lait.) In other piece a blonde, busty B-movie type braces a slightly puzzled-looking Pink P ther, in the process recalling elements of Baroque and Rococo. This was the exh tion that had the critic Robert Hughes c plaining, "The art world is grievously i the moment."

But it wasn't just the lowbrow sub matter that stunned people: in "Banal one sees how deeply Koons understands power of materials—it misses the poin assume this is one big exercise in kitsch.

; project he engaged workshops in Ger-
ny and Italy that had a long tradition of
rking in ceramic, porcelain, and wood.
eir craftsmen were able to respond to his
eds, his pushing, and his direction, and
resulting objects have a breathtaking au-
nticity. Koons himself has been quoted as
ing, "I was telling the Bourgeois to em-
ce the things that it likes, the things it re-
nds to. For example, when you were a
ng child and you went to your grand-
ther's place and she had this little knick-
ack, that's inside you, and that's part you.
brace that, don't try to erase it."

oons's next foray into popular imagery would prove to be one of the dest episodes in 20th-century as well as an incredible tale m a human standpoint. Koons s it all started when he saw icture of Ilona Staller in *Stern* gazine, sometime in 1988. ghtning struck. He recalls, "I s making a billboard for an ibition at the Whitney Muse-. And in the tradition of col-e, I thought it would be in-esting to put myself with her a photograph. I came up with idea of a work called *Made Heaven,* which would be ad-tised on a billboard like it's ilm. I guess I felt that I was art star, and I was playing h the idea of becoming an-ier kind of star in our celeb- culture."

He sent her an invitation, via lawyers, to become a part of work. She told me that his st correspondence did not ex-ly have her jumping up and wn with excitement. As she nembers it (in her Italianate glish), "I never heard the name f Koons in my life—probably cause I wasn't so interested contemporary art at that ne. I like so much Dalí. I love much Marilyn by what's-his-me. But, believe me, I never heard the me Jeff. One day I got the fax saying at Jeff Koons was a very important art-American who wants to meet Ilona cciolina . . . I think maybe this is a very ange thing, maybe best [to say] no. I ing this fax and make trash. But my ex-anager [said], 'No, no, no. We should re-ond because this artist might be doing od work.'"

Koons's choice of a model couldn't have en more spot-on for him, aesthetically. aller's persona, La Cicciolina, was like a ing readymade for him—her sets and her stumes had a flair for presentation that was Koonsian even before he tuned in to her. Even the plots of her erotic videos have that oddball sense of innocence that is such a big part of his work. She also shares his gift for selling. When I called her recently in Rome she explained, "I am artist because I have my own sensibility. I have my popularity. . . . You know, so many very beautiful young women exist in the world, but so many [of] those young and beautiful women have to disappear because no have talent, or something *significante*. . . . Or *magnetismo.* Now, I know I have every [one of] these things."

Add chutzpah, or the Italian equivalent. Staller, who is 48 now, was actually born in Budapest, and was once crowned Miss Hungary. She's likely done quite a bit of creative editing of her own life story, which is told in rather hilarious detail on her Web site, cicciolina.com. (Minors, beware.) By the 70s she was living in Rome and ended up on Italian radio. Somewhere along the way she also got into pornography (sorting out her story is a bit like untangling Janis Joplin's hair). It was on the radio that Cicciolina, which translates as "little dumpling," was created. In fact, she's more like a French curve than a dumpling, and these assets paid off on her next venture, which proved that all those feminist and postmodern theorists were onto something when they said that "sex is political." When she was voted into the Italian parliament, Cicciolina used her va-va-va-voom power and popularity to push a fairly serious liberal agenda that included animal rights, women's equality, environmental protection, sex education, legalization of drugs, free love, and peace in the Middle East. She didn't encounter much legislative success during her five-year stint—her absences became almost as talked about as her surprising presence. (No Hillary Clinton, she.)

It was inevitable that she and Koons would click on all fronts. When they finally got together to begin to work on the Whitney billboard—he was then 34, she was 36—Koons was smitten. He would later say, "I met somebody who played a victim to pornography, and I found her at the time to be very beautiful. I found her very innocent. . . . I fell in love with her." But it took the more experienced Staller longer to succumb to this eager American fellow. She describes their first collaboration like this: "I like him, but I not fall in love. I said to him, 'I not love you.' He said, 'I wait—finally you love me.'. . . He have a fascination, no? Not easy to understand. Sometimes when we going and eating, I see him, he see me. We not speak [each other's language], but we look in face. . . . I give a kissing face, but we not have sex in that time."

Eventually, though, she too was a goner, and they began a romantic relationship, one that would turn out to be a momentous chapter in both their personal lives but would also lead to the creation of a series of paintings and sculptures—in porcelain, wood, glass, and marble—that broke taboos that had been firmly in place in Western art for hundreds of years, bringing sex into the foreground of contemporary art as frankly and as shockingly as Robert Mapplethorpe's photographs did.



SAY GRILLED CHEESE
Koons with his dealers Ileana Sonnabend and Antonio Homem at the Sonnabend Gallery in Chelsea. The painting behind them is *Cheeky.* Note its hyperarticulated sandwich.

It was in late 1989—after the whole censorship controversy that had erupted over the cancellation of Mapplethorpe's exhibition at the Corcoran Gallery in Washington—that I received a call from Koons inviting me to go and see some new things he was working on. I had written about the Mapplethorpe brouhaha for *The New Yorker,* but I was not prepared for what Koons showed me: photographs of himself and Cicciolina so explicit and geared to shock that

there was no way the work could avoid charges of pornography; in fact, it seemed to invite them. I remember sitting there, looking at the slides that he was projecting on a screen, and wondering what the hell I was going to say when the lights went on. By then we knew each other pretty well, and looking at slides of one of your professional acquaintances naked, with an erection, getting into all sorts of contortions with a porn star, ejaculating, isn't exactly an everyday occurrence for art critics. It would have been stupid to pretend that this was plain old ordinary art. I had also noticed that Koons was very caught up in his physique. He had shown me his weight room—he was like an athlete in training for the Olympics. (This was probably a good idea, considering the acrobatics he and Staller were getting into.) By the way he spoke about her, and because he seemed to have a newfound physical sense of himself, I could tell that there was more going on here than the possibility of a blockbuster show and notoriety beyond what he'd ever dreamed of. It was obvious to me that Koons had a lot more invested in Cicciolina than simply his next body of work.

Before it all fell apart this couple seemed to be exactly what Koons had titled it in the beginning: a match "made in heaven." On a few occasions I had the chance to witness them together up close. Between her exaggerated sweetness and his courteousness the effect was a bit like hanging out with a Hallmark card. But there were obvious contradictions in play, some of them untenable. Koons may have been willing to exploit Cicciolina's image as a human readymade. ("Ilona and I were born for each other," he said at one point. "She's a media woman. I'm a media man. We are the contemporary Adam and Eve.") But at the same time he wasn't ready to drop all the values that he holds sacred. Recently when I was talking to him, I asked if at the onset of their relationship he'd worried about whether their different experiences of the world—she an "Only in Italy, kids" combination of porn star and politician, he a cutting-edge artist, but one with an idealized, *Father Knows Best* view of family life—might be a source of romantic difficulties. He replied, "I just felt that the art world would be a world where actually, if we were really in love and if she did want to distance herself from her past and not continue to hang on to it, that this could work and that the art world could accept it. So I really kind of blindly went forward."

For her part Staller says she was pleased to be in this new arena: "I am very happy about [meeting Jeff] because I liked so much the idea of being in the art world." She also told me, "I loved Jeff so much. We did good sexually. He very sweet sometimes. He was incredible person. I don't know what happened." That's the thing that makes this story so compelling: even though their romance played out in some of the most exhibitionistic displays to ever take place between two celebrities (which says a lot), it was painfully real.

When a few of the works that came out of their first graphic photo session were previewed at the Venice Biennale in the summer of 1990, Koons and Cicciolina caused the kind of hoopla with paparazzi that normally goes on at movie festivals such as Cannes. It seemed as though the two of them were well on their way to becoming a whole new kind of first couple of the arts. They announced their intention to marry. There were a few little setbacks—such as the fight that occurred when Cicciolina publicly announced she would sleep with Saddam Hussein if he'd release foreigners being held in Iraq and Koons became a furious jealous boyfriend. Despite such obvious differences in perspective, passion won out, and there was a marriage in Budapest in 1991. The pictures look like some kind of blast from the past—a shy bride and a beaming groom.

What came next, however, was anything but a typical art show. In the fall of 1991 the complete "Made in Heaven" exhibition was unveiled at Sonnabend. By then, word of mouth on this body of work was so strong that the television cameras were lined up outside the gallery on opening day. Koons's mother refers to this exhibition as "The You-Know-What Show," and one can hardly blame her. There were pieces on the walls that were so out there, one could blush describing them. No matter how worldly one was, this show was a real mind bender. I was at the gallery on the Saturday it opened, and I have to say there was plenty that was funny about witnessing the other show: the people looking at what can only be called giant hard-core pornographic paintings on canvas. One well-known collector, who is extremely nearsighted, got up real close to examine a painting titled *Jeff Eating Ilona,* and seemed completely oblivious to its content—she might as well have been examining a Ming vase. Imagine the surprise other collectors had when they walked into Sonnabend's office during that period and found a giant painting titled *Butt Red (Close-Up)* hanging right above her desk. Sonnabend was so cool about it you would have thought she was showing Grandma Moses. Elsewhere in the gallery there were a number of glass sculptures of the couple going at it Kamasutra-style. I pictured Park Avenue maids dusting them and fainting—or quitting. What made the show even more loaded was how Koons wove art history i his blatantly sexual images. To this day gets dewy-eyed when he talks about two the paintings, which he titled *Manet a Manet Soft.* Imagine *Le Déjeuner sur l'Herl* and then some.

Needless to say, this was the best-attend exhibition in the history of Sonnabe Gallery, though the artist's mother co have lived without some of it. She sa "Some of [the work] I don't think was n essary.... There were some beautiful thi in that show ... like that huge bouquet flowers." Those very same flowers were a ciding factor for art historian David Syl ter. He remembers, "I was looking so years ago at one of his flower sculptures a I decided he was a great artist. The Surr ists tried to be shocking. I thought, Ko really *is* shocking. The intense sexual cha that he gives to innocent or semi innoc objects was especially palpable in th flower pieces."

Koons's sense of timing with "Made Heaven" was perfect. He and Map thorpe weren't the only artists who h forced the issue of sex into art—for a wh in the 80s and early 90s, it felt like sex a sexuality were the only subjects of cont porary art. This makes total sense. Fe nism and AIDS helped to make people derstand how important it was to change subject from a "dirty" one to something t needed to be looked at and talked ab and understood—something that was ca ble of being revelatory. Some of this was tle more than faddism, but when the w cut deeper—as it did with Mapplethor and Koons as well as Nan Goldin and Da Wojnarowicz—it was an opportunity for insight. Some of that insight had to do w how we react to sexually explicit work. Ko himself has said, "If there is art to my w it is what the viewer walks away wit From "Made in Heaven" one walked a with a sharper consciousness of, say, lines we draw between art and life, high low, appropriate and not appropriate, p nography and art. That was its power ability to engage and, as always with Ko its extraordinary execution.

The critical reaction was divided. So thought the work daring and illuminat others said Koons was indulging in sh for shock's sake, and it wasn't easy to the work—especially in America, where puritanical ethos continues to make sex X-rated subject. But there were other, bi problems: Koons may have been turned by the character La Cicciolina, and he have shared this quite visibly with the wo but now he was a husband and he wa his wife to himself, becoming outraged w she continued to work and, as he put "not maintain our marriage vows." At

int he told her he wanted a divorce, but en she announced she was pregnant they ;ided to try to make the marriage work. eir lawyers had finally overcome the ob- tions that the United States Immigration partment had with regard to Staller's visa plication, and she was able to move here. e couple found a spot they liked in Man- tan, a 13-room town house on the Upper st Side (where Koons still lives). It was sen for its location—near the zoo in Cen- l Park. On October 29, 1992, Ludwig ximilian Koons was born at Mt. Sinai spital at 8:30 in the morning. Koons told proudly, "I was the first person to greet dwig and give him a kiss."

nd then the real hell began. Basically, Koons learned that you can't keep a m superstar down on the farm, even if it ear the zoo. Saying that she needed to urn to Rome to attend to some personal tters for a short while in October 1993, ller left with Ludwig. When they didn't ne back to the States, Koons tried to lo- e them. He discovered that his wife was ually in Ecuador "on a business trip" d had left his son in Rome. (Koons found counts in a number of South American wspapers of the erotic stage shows she s doing—this was no Greta Garbo, want- ; to be alone.) He hotfooted it over to ly and brought Ludwig, an American cit- n, home to the family residence, and filed divorce in the Supreme Court of New rk as soon as Staller followed them back the States. Both parties agreed, under nerican jurisdiction, to have 50-50 cus- ly of Ludwig, who was to remain in New rk State pending a final decision of the urt. It was also decided that for the time ing Staller would continue to live in the vn house with Koons; during this period y met with court-appointed psychiatrists, o observed them in relation to Ludwig in ler to determine which parent was more table for his custody. And to ensure that ither party would remove the child from jurisdiction of the state of New York, a dyguard was hired. But Staller wasn't cciolina for nothing. She asked the body- ard to do her a favor and get her a pack cigarettes, and the next thing Koons ew, mother and child were in Rome. A ort while later the American courts dis- lved the marriage and awarded exclusive stody of Ludwig to his father.

But by then Ludwig was living in Rome th his mother, and for the last eight years, ht up until the present, Koons and Staller ve been engaged in a tug-of-war for their ild. Though Koons's custody has been rat- ed by an Italian court, Staller won her ost recent appeal in Italy and continues to ve primary custody; Koons has the right to end seven days a month as well as summer holidays with Ludwig in Italy, which he does. He speaks often of his fear of the damage that is being done to his son emotionally in his current environment, smack in the middle of La Cicciolina's world. While Koons remains optimistic that he has the law on his side and will eventually win Ludwig back, he also says, ruefully, of both the pornography scene and the Italian legal system, "I did not know the culture."

Amid all the Sturm und Drang with Cicciolina, and in the wake of the "Made in Heaven" controversies and frustrations, the artist experienced an unqualified success with 1992's *Puppy,* a 40-foot West Highland terrier made out of living flowers, which



I MARRIED AN ITALIAN PORN STAR
Koons's ex-wife, Ilona Staller, with their son, Ludwig, then two years old, in Rome, 1995. Of happier days, she says, "I loved Jeff so much. We did good sexually. He was incredible person."

is probably his most popular sculpture to date. It was first shown near the 1992 Dokumenta exhibition in Kassel, Germany. Koons hadn't been included in this prestigious international exposition, but he was invited to contribute to a sculpture exhibition that was organized on the periphery of the big event. He showed them! *Puppy* not only stole the sculpture show, but it was the talk of Dokumenta too. (Since then different versions of the work have popped up in various spots, including the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain, and also in New York, where it guarded Rockefeller Center last summer. There's nothing like seeing its tail, which in Bilbao was made mostly of petunias and marigolds, wag in the wind.)

The work that followed *Puppy,* the "Celebration" series, which Koons began in 1993, speaks volumes about what was going on in his life during that period. "I was trying to communicate to my son, when he's older, just how much I was thinking about him all the time," Koons says. Indeed, childhood's iconography—its toys and games and foods, idealized and romanticized—have obviously been his inspiration for most of "Celebration," which is made up of 20 sculptures and 16 paintings. Much of the work suggests a child's paradise, a hyperintense Disneyland for kids with long art-historical memories. How Koons turns various common playthings into art is a lesson in vision. He'll take a party favor, such as a balloon dog that a clown might have made, and seven years later it's an 11-foot-high stainless-steel sculpture, *Balloon Dog,* that has extraordinary formal and narrative power—and, unlike a child's real plaything, never deflates. When we were speaking, David Sylvester paired some of the sculptures in "Celebration" with Bernini fountains in Rome. "They're both weighty and buoyant," he said. But a piece like *Balloon Dog* can also be seen as a contemporary equivalent of the mythical Trojan horse. One can imagine it containing Koons's army riding to Rome to bring his son home.

With "Celebration," however, Koons's processes of transformation turned out to be so demanding that they almost did him in. The paintings were complex and took years, but nothing was as tough as the sculpture. No one involved with the project expected it to be so difficult to arrive at these flawless surfaces. An anticipated show at the Guggenheim's SoHo branch, originally scheduled for 1996, had to be postponed four times before it was finally canceled, which led to much talk within the art world that Koons was at best washed up, and at worst seriously unhinged.

At one point, when Koons was attempting to make one of the Guggenheim's deadlines, he had 70 assistants helping on the art. My favorite place to watch what was going on with "Celebration" was in the back studio. Here one witnessed Koons functioning like some kind of Renaissance master, but updated. It was like a giant paint-by-numbers factory—Andy Warhol would have loved it, and there were more color swatches here than in Martha Stewart's wildest dreams. But there was also darkness. Over and over he destroyed what wasn't meeting his standards. I'd stop by and see what appeared to be progress on a work; a few weeks later it was back to square one. One began to hear rumors of how he would trash work that people had spent weeks on, and his reputation as a neurotic madman grew—more than one critic has referred to him as the Orson Welles of art. When I'd go and visit him at the studio during this period, and hear him talk

about what he was trying to achieve in the pieces, I had a different image of him. I wondered if he wasn't a contemporary Don Quixote, a romantic figure on a mission to find some impossible ideal.

Eventually, though, the work on "Celebration" stopped altogether. The money had run out, and from 1996 until 1999 the studio felt like an art morgue. How Koons got to this point is both complicated and simple. Having left Sonnabend after "Made in Heaven" because he felt he wasn't being supported enough, Koons was working with three dealers for this project. They financed the art by pre-selling some of it, something that Sonnabend had not done with him. When it turned out that it would be much more complex and expensive to get the perfectly smooth, curving, reflective surfaces that Koons was after in the sculptures, he realized there was a large gap between what he had been paid and what the work would cost. Who was going to pay the real costs—the dealers, the collectors, or the artist? A few of his collectors, such as Dakis Joannou, are so committed to his work that they paid what it took (anywhere up to $2 million) to complete their pieces, but in most instances, finances froze.

When I asked Gary McCraw, who has managed Koons's studio for the last 10 years, if he ever saw Jeff ready to quit, I was told, "Jeff regroups. He doesn't give up."

The artist's perfectionism has been a double-edged sword. To some people it makes him a pain in the ass, an artist who is difficult and doesn't obey the demands of the marketplace. To others, like the Modern's Kurt Varnedoe, it is this very perfectionism that separates him from the crowd. Varnedoe says, "Jeff is often described as knowing, calculating, smart, ironic, and strategic. But I've always felt that there's something else. There's something about those surfaces and that degree of perfectionism that goes beyond anything that is necessary. I've always felt that it is that extra surplus of investment in the work, the irrational nature of it, that makes it art. To me it is what makes him an interesting artist, and a singular one."

Obviously he's not your regular guy, even if he dresses and sometimes acts like one—Joe Blow wouldn't go bankrupt trying to perfect a giant balloon dog. And despite his air of reason and control, Koons can be as hot-blooded as Brando in *A Streetcar Named Desire.* At a certain stage in his lawsuits with Cicciolina he destroyed all the pieces that were left in his studio from the "Made in Heaven" series, slashing at the paintings and getting Gary McCraw and some of his other assistants to help him smash the sculptures to smithereens. He and McCraw told me proudly that they were really hard to demolish because they were so well made! (Collectors who did buy "Made in Heaven" works now own very valuable art.)

It was Koons who pulled himself out of the jam he was in with "Celebration." He had taken to dropping by the Sonnabend Gallery, where his old friends and dealers, Ileana and Antonio, would commiserate with him. At one point he brought up a new idea for an art project that was on his mind, and they said, "Let's do it." The resulting work is titled "Easyfun." In 1999, when word spread that Koons had returned to Sonnabend and planned to show a new body of work there, plenty of people said they'd believe it when they saw it. But there were also those who couldn't wait to see what he did. The day the "Easyfun" show opened I popped by the gallery early. The door was locked. After banging on it I was let in. A few minutes later there was more banging. In came Varnedoe. And more knocking. This time it was Peter Schjeldahl, *The New Yorker*'s art critic. The visitors who were after early peeks didn't stop. Soon there was a *minyan* of critics. And when the show finally did open officially, the place was mobbed. Koons sl well that night—he'd been up for four d and nights.

The show was so vibrant one can j imagine the sense of liberation that Ko experienced while he was creating it. A not being able to move forward with "C bration," he took off like a rocket, creat three new paintings and a series of sim colored wall sculptures that are as reflec as mirrors. The collage-like paintings, wh are packed with energy and wit and s prise, forecast the Pop Surrealism that has been developing ever since. Each w is created from a selection of found ima that caught Koons's eye and that are t knit together by a computer. (In fact, th works couldn't have existed before comp ers.) The paintings are rife with the sex undercurrent that Koons likes to layer in work. *Hair,* for instance, includes a bouff hairdo that overlaps a gooey chocolate-c cookie dropping into a splash of m which, as Koons took pains to point ou me, doubles as a spurt of sperm. Th works, as well as another floral sculpt *Split-Rocker,* which he eventually showe Avignon, France, seem to have freed Ko from his trap. Suddenly things started move on "Celebration" too. Slowly but s ly he began to complete some of the sc tural pieces. This didn't just happen beca they'd figured out how to create the pie without imperfections—what Koons and crew call "wobbles"—or because he r had some money thanks to the succes "Easyfun." There was confidence aro Koons again.

It wasn't long before art-world gossip it that Koons was back. All this, coin ing with his recent auction success, put heat on him again. More exhibitions w scheduled, and the Guggenheim cam with a commission for its branch in G many, the Deutsche Guggenheim Berli also scheduled a major retrospective for year 2004, to open in New York and t travel; this act of faith just strengthened notion that Koons is one of the most portant artists working today. The Be show, which took place last fall, unve seven new paintings entitled "Easyfu Ethereal," which takes the Pop Surreal of "Easyfun" even further. Lisa Denni who arranged the exhibition and co-cur it with Robert Rosenblum (and who n lost her belief in Koons even during protractions of "Celebration"), laughed w she told me the story of what had h pened the day the work had to be pic up and flown to Germany: "We had p ple standing outside the studio on Br way at seven in the morning. They ca me to say that no one was answering door. I phoned Jeff, and he answered,



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aining that he was in the back with his sistants just 'tweaking' certain things. He ked for more time. I said, 'Jeff, you must pen the door.'"

He did. But what is it that drives him to so compulsive about his work? Since his ed to get it perfect goes beyond anything at I've ever seen, there's clearly something the bottom of it all that has to do with ore than just inspired lunacy or a will to ake the best work possible. It has to do ith faith in art. In some ways he's like a gure from one of Edward Hopper's paintgs of the 30s and 40s, a salesman whose oduct is belief in art. Here's what Koons ld me: "When I'm working on someing, I'm going to give the bottom of the piece as much attention as the top. A lot of the time artists will work on the visible part of something and then you go around the back and see they didn't spend any time there. I think that makes you lose spiritual trust. All of a sudden you feel let down. I want to create work that always maintains the viewer's trust. I'm looking for friendship through this interaction."

If one asks Koons to pick a favorite work of his own he will often mention his Michael Jackson sculpture, and it's understandable why the piece would have enormous meaning for him. Although he and Jackson are quite different artists, there is an apt comparison to be made between the two: they both seem to be such lonely figures and both have an epic obsession with childhood, and with maintaining a child's-eye view of the world. So much of Koons's art seems to be trying to make innocence last forever, like that balloon dog, yet at the same time he spikes it all with a heightened sense of sexuality. (Maybe that picture-perfect childhood had some wobbles in it after all.) But as often as he talks about a work's sexuality, Koons will also talk about its spirituality, and as we were drawing our discussions about his life to a close, I thought about something I read in *The Gnostic Gospels* by Elaine Pagels: "If you do not bring forth what is within you, what you do not bring forth will destroy you." □

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lugh Hefner

NTINUED FROM PAGE 245 daughter. But he ems to let Christie run the show.

Like Hef, she has proved deft at the art of lf-invention, positioning herself as one of the ost prominent women C.E.O.'s in America id a known feminist (she contributes regurly to female Democrats) who happens to ead a company that sells pornography.

She folds her hands neatly on the table, oking pleased. This is the first time in her nure that the company's been on an upving.

"We've got the power of the brand," she ys, in her smoky voice.

The brand still seems to be Hef himself. hey're finding that, approaching 75, he still lls cigarette lighters and T-shirts and baseall caps. The attention he's gotten since sepating from Kimberley and establishing a T. Barnum–esque connection with Brande, andy, Mandy, and Jessica has been onoing, and celebratory. Young Hollywood Gwyneth Paltrow, Ben Stiller, Sarah Michelle ellar, Fred Durst) has rediscovered him. lef is hip again. He likes to tell the story f how Leonardo DiCaprio said it was his antasy" to find himself at three A.M. in the famous Grotto, the Mansion's underground vimming pool, outfitted with scented anles and love cushions.

"*Playboy* was founded on his lifestyle," hristie says of her father. (In truth, it was ie other way around.) "Now it's possible think of our becoming a billion-dollar ompany."

There's the sound of the girlfriends' highitched giggling coming from the foyer.

O.K., ready?" says Cathi (O'Malley). It's warm in the Mansion, and she's ripped to a white tank top, no bra, while ating kung pao chicken in the "Mediterran-an Room."

A lot of butlers seem to be coming in just now, fussing with the dogs, with the plants.

"O.K., there's Tina, Buffy, Katie. Me, which is Cathi. Regina, Tiffany. And Stephanie is coming in tomorrow. So there's seven of us—one for every day of the week!"

"Hee-hee!"

Regina (Lauren) is also here, beaming from under a Playboy baseball cap. "What we figured out is a good way to remember all our names is they rhyme! Tina-Regina, Katie-Cathi, Stephanie-Tiffany. And then Buffy."

"Hee-hee!"

"It's fun being part of the group," says Cathi—they call it "the Group." "Actually most people think that during the day it's all exciting, but mostly it's like being at your grandma's house. . . . Except for the zoo."

She's referring to Hef's collection of exotic birds, spider monkeys, and Terry, a 29-year-old woolly monkey who sits in the yard, on a leash attached to a tree, looking grave.

"She doesn't like girls," Regina says, wrinkling her nose.

"But overall it's so much fun being here!" Cathi says. "It's kind of like being in a sorority house now that there are so many girlfriends—you hang out, go shopping together. . . . We're like a family. You would never think that seven girls would get along, but we do!"

"I have been dreaming about this since I was six years old," says Regina. "I found my dad's *Playboy*s under his bed when I was six years old and I have been dreaming about it ever since. I always admired all the girls."

"Hee-hee!"

"And my mom was really open, and she would always show me, 'Look, there's *Playboy* on TV,'" Regina says, "and I just knew that I belonged here and this is where I wanted to be. It's incredible fun every day and every night!"

She was supporting herself as a day trader in Las Vegas when she got herself invited to go clubbing with Hef and the girls last Halloween, and then "we kind of hit it off from there."

Cathi, who's from Chicago, came to L.A. to shoot a *Playboy* video, *Sexy Girls Next Door.* "And I got invited to one of the parties," she said, "and I decided I liked California! So I called up and asked if I could come to some other parties, and they said yeah."

Hef has a person on staff (Jenny Lewis) whose job it is to keep a list of women who are welcome to come to his parties and his weekly "Fun in the Sun" Sunday pool event, at which the Playmates frolic topless; celebrities are usually invited.

"And eventually he took notice of me," Cathi says, "and he invited me out on a date with him, and then one date turned into, like, 10—and I've been living here now for two months!"

She smiles. Her mouth is what a porn magazine might call "wet."

"When I first came in," Cathi says, "it was just Buffy and Katie and Tina, and it had been that way for about three months, so they were used to being just them three, but I sort of started a trend!"

"'Cause right after that, I came in!" says Regina.

Tiffany (Holliday), a student at Mesa College in San Diego, and Stephanie (Heinrich), the first *Playboy* "Cyber Girl," followed soon after that.

A skinny Cockney butler comes in to cart the Chinese leftovers out to the kitchen.

"Did a doctor call for me today?" Cathi asks.

"Yeah, he said you got six months to live," says the butler.

Cathi puts a hand to her chest and breathes an exaggerated sigh of relief—"Oh, good! I went to the gynecologist for the first time. And he said he would call if there was

Hugh Hefner

anything wrong—so no news is good news. You know, when I was in high school they were talking about how teenagers think they're invisible—no, *invincible*—and they think nothing can happen to them. Well, I'm more paranoid now than ever!"

The corridors of the second floor of the Mansion are lined with photographs—hundreds of them—dating back to 1970, when Barbi Benton picked out the house. They offer a kind of history of the place, and of the last 30 years of celebrity—there seems to be almost no one known who goes unrepresented.

But, lining the walls in no particular order, as they do, it's hard to tell what it all means, if anything. Hef appears in most of the shots.

There's Ralph Nader, Walter Matthau, Patty Hearst, Darva Conger, Cameron Diaz, Mick and Bianca, Ringo, Ben Affleck . . .

Cathi talks: "After I did the video," she says, "I was on the cover of *Girlfriends,* the special lingerie college edition. It only comes out once a year, so it's kind of a big deal to be on the cover—"

. . . Dick Van Patten, Carl Reiner, Bill Cosby, Kris Kristofferson, Dr. Ruth, Eddie Murphy . . .

"I had a normal job as a waitress in Santa Monica but"—she giggles—"obviously I'm not doing that anymore. . . . My brother moved out here and lives in my old apartment. Five years of college so he can be a manager of Office Max! Now I pay his bills—"

. . . Charlie Sheen in a bathrobe, Jimmy Caan with a Bunny, Jack Nicholson and Warren Beatty with long hair, Whitney, Whoopi, Leo, Cher, more Jimmy Caan . . .

"When my family found out I was living here, it was kind of the same reaction as when they found out I was doing *Playboy*—by the way, my mom is a choir singer for my church and also, like, the president of the church council, so I thought she would flip out!—"

. . . Gene Simmons, Arnold Schwarzenegger, more Jimmy Caan . . .

"But my mom just goes, 'Well, I'm not upset, and I'm not mad at you—in fact I'm proud of you,' and I kind of went, What? Excuse me?—"

. . . Bob Saget, Weird Al Yankovic, Rod Stewart swinging around a Bunny with no panties on, Jimmy Caan on roller skates in overalls with no shirt on . . .

"And she said, 'Well, you're going towards what you want to do, and eventually when you get there, you'll know you took these steps—'"

. . . a Bunny giving fellatio to a banana, Roseanne, Pamela Anderson . . .

"And we didn't tell my dad for a really long time—my mom does that every once in a while—"

. . . Michael Jackson . . .

"She knows about the group—she was here and I gave her a tour and she met Hef and they really liked each other—my mom loves him. She thinks he's the nicest guy in the world! The funniest thing she ever said was 'I think I made him nervous—tell him I'm sorry—'"

. . . John Belushi looking extremely drunk, Bill Clinton . . .

"And it made him chuckle—"

. . . Hugh Hefner, many shots of Hef—Hef clowning around in Native American headdress; Hef playing the saxophone; Hef dancing, singing, posing with Bunnies, Bunnies, Bunnies; Hef with Kimberley, and Brande, Sandy, Mandy, and Jessica . . .

"Look," Cathi says, pointing to another picture, "there's Tina, Buffy, and Katie!"—the group. "And that's my head."

. . . Hef and his sons dressed up for Halloween—the boys have Edvard Munch *Scream* costumes on.

"And my dad just says," Cathi says, "'Well, she's gonna do what she's gonna do.' And it's true. Whatever I want to do, I go for it."

In Hef's mirrored dressing room, adjoining his bathroom, four of the girlfriends are getting ready to go out. Three of them are naked—Tina, Regina, and Cathi—breasts bobbing like melons under cellophane as they blow their platinum hair out.

There's the sound of the dryers and R&B music playing. They sing along, "*I'm lookin' for a real love!*" There's the smell of nail polish.

"Las Palmas is cool! We saw Britney Spears there with Justin Timberlake—kissing!" Cathi shouts.

"You don't mind if we're naked, do you?" Tina (Jordan) asks.

All of them are wearing Bunny pendants.

"We've met Cameron Diaz, Janet Jackson, Chazz Palminteri," says Katie (Lohmann). "They come up to us!"

"You mean they come up to Hef!" Tina corrects. Hef calls her "the mama hen." Now she's wearing a pink robe, open. She's sitting at the prime seat, Hef's dressing table. Regina and Cathi sit cross-legged on the floor—using the mirrors on the closet doors—like ladies-in-waiting.

Inside one of the closets is a rack of Hef's silk pajamas—purple, blue, black, ivory, magenta, aquamarine; hanging next to them are seven pairs of the girls' pajamas, all flannel, powdery pink.

Hef's there in the background, in his own black bathroom, shaving, humming a tune.

In between him and the girlfriends is an enormous, sunken tub.

"See how it's kind of like a girls' dorm tory?" says Cathi, cheeks red, hot air poin ed at her head.

"Yeah, it's like going to school, but there no homework, and you get to party ever night—and you can sleep in!" Katie says.

Katie's already dressed in a black mini ar sucking on a lollipop. (She says, "I have problem with sucking on suckers all the time.

Cathi says, "Tina's the mom and Katie business-like, and Tiffany's the schoolgi and Buffy likes to party, and Regina's bus ness, too, but she's sweet—she's a mix."

"I'm the den mother," shouts Tina. "We I am a mom"—her two-year-old daughte Tatiana, is here tonight, somewhere, in o of the 30 rooms of the Mansion—"so it's ju natural for me to worry."

"Oh, come on—I thought it's becau you're the oldest," says Regina.

"Regina!" Cathi says.

"Oh, I'm just joking," says Regina. "I practically as old as you are"—she's 2 Tina's 28, and having some trouble getti a definite date from Hef on when her ce terfold will run.

"I'm the brains," says Katie. She sudden burps, a scorcher. "Excuuuuuse me!" she sa

Cathi announces brightly, "Hey, guys. can drink tonight!"

Katie rolls her eyes. "Oh, great."

"I had to take antibiotics," says Cathi, "a I was sick for a while, and I couldn't drink-

"—and wasn't able to participate in tracurricular activities!" Regina says.

The girlfriends giggle.

Cathi pretends to look shocked. "Y guys have a one-track mind!"

"'*Clap on, clap off, the Clapper!*'" Ka snorts. "Hello? Chlamydia? Because she h a bladder infection. When I had to take a tibiotics even for my breast surgery, peop would come up to me and say, 'Clap—'"

"Hey, you bitch," says Cathi, finally cat ing on, "I do not have that!"

"You guys didn't even get it when I sa it," scoffs Katie.

"Oh sorry, Einstein." Tina laughs.

Hef ducks his head in, fastening Bu ny cuff links. "Hey, kids, it's quarter 11. Aw, you all look so purty," he sa

"Honey, take a picture!" says Tina, thru ing a disposable camera at him. The gi leap around her to appear in the shot. Th pull towels around themselves. Katie yan a towel around her dress.

"Oh, so it looks like you're getting ready Hef cackles, positioning the camera.

The pictures are for his wall; for his 1,3 volume personal scrapbook, which resi in a room upstairs; or for the opening pa of *Playboy* ("The World of Playboy"), wh chronicle his life.

"Cheeeese!"

After he's gone, Tina says, low, "I j started my wardrobe shoot for my cent

l. I'm probably Miss May or June, but we n't know until after I get my centerfold ne . . . "

Katie pulls the sucker out of her mouth. m Miss April 2001," she says.

think I was destined to live this partic- ular lifestyle," Katie says. She shares a lroom in the Mansion with Cathi. It's orated with *Playboy* centerfolds and Bar- dolls still in the boxes, and pictures of at clubs with Hef and other celebrities iffy, etc.).

"I was always the one in school who was high fashion, high class, drove a fancy —and that's just how I wanted to contin- my life," says Katie. She's from Scottsdale, zona.

"And there was some fascination about ng a centerfold—and shooting was every- ıg I thought it would be. And the pic- es—I'm really, really happy with them. The me of it would kind of be 'country girl,' when I say that, I don't mean cowboy s and boots—I mean English-riding, more sy-type country style. There are some pic- es of me rolling around in hay and some tures of me with hay in my mouth.

"I am the brains of the group—no, just ding. I am the business girl. I actually uld love to be a photo editor down the for *Playboy*. . . . But that's definitely if acting career doesn't take off.

"I've been in a number of movies—ac- lly I'm going to start popping up every- ere soon. I'm in *Knight Club* with Lou ımond Phillips, and I was on *Rude Awak- ng* with Mario Van Peebles, and I just one called *Bubble Boy,* which is a Dis- film with Fabio—"

"She's Fabio's girlfriend in the movie!" thi says, laughing.

'tell you," says Doc Saginor, "the best .medication I have for him are in the lrooms upstairs—"

"What's he have, a cloning machine in basement?" asks Kent.

"It's better than with those twins!" says ıc. "His pressure would go sky-high." The n from Card Night are having their milk ıkes and warm oatmeal cookies before ng home to bed.

Hef zips into the dining room, talking t in the way he associates with comedy: ›on't listen to this man, he is not really a ctor. Take seven blondes and call me in morning!"

He looks bright and youthful tonight, in lark Armani suit, a red shirt with a white lar. He admits to the trimming of a little rkey skin" around the neck, but it wouldn't ne as a surprise to find out he'd had more rk done. "There's a portrait of me in the ic that's getting *very* old," he likes to say. He checks his watch, showing a smidgen of irritation. "Getting one girl to be on time is hard enough"—he laughs dryly—"but five?"

And suddenly there's the irrepressible puppy sound—the girlfriends, all in tight black leather, satin, spandex, dripping fake diamonds.

Buffy (Tyler) makes her first appearance tonight; she's the more distant one with the perfect snub nose; she was Miss November, has her own room, and gets dressed alone.

"Cheeeese!"

A butler is taking disposable-camera shots.

"Seen a blonde about yea high, with blue eyes?" another butler snickers, aside.

"Oh, I hear her," Tina says, pouting. Her daughter, Tatiana, is upstairs with a nanny, and crying.

Hef takes Tina by the arm and escorts her out to the car; she doesn't turn back.

"*Oooof.*" Cathi climbs into the limo parked in the circular driveway. "Thank God they got us a bigger car!"

"Now all we need is a bigger bed!" says Tina.

Hef cackles.

The girlfriends pile in—10 legs, 10 arms, five heads of blond hair (Stephanie and Tiffany are out of town tonight)—and the limo smells of sharp perfume.

"*Can I get a what, what?*" Jay-Z raps on the sound system.

The girls "*What, what!*" down Sunset, doing the homegirl head roll.

"Which one is J-D?" asks Hef.

"No, honey, it's Jay-Z!"

The girls guffaw.

"The only J-D he knows is Jack Daniel's!" says Tina.

"That is so cute!"

"Who let mah dawgs out?" Hef says gamely.

They're beside themselves with laughter.

Regina starts pouring champagne.

"O.K., honey, where's the pineapple juice?"

Hef and the girlfriends like pineapple juice with their champagne. He shouts up to his bodyguard, Mark McCaleb.

Mark turns around quickly. "This is a rental, sir, we didn't think—"

"Well"—Hef shakes his head in disbelief—"we need to start making a list."

"There's a 7-Eleven up ahead, sir, we could stop—"

"No, I don't think so," Hef says.

They ride in silence.

"It would make a cute picture, though, wouldn't it," Regina says after a moment, trying to be consoling, "us all parked outside a 7-Eleven?"

Outside the club the kids in line go wild when they see Hef and the blondes getting out of the car. Mark holds an arm stiff against them all pushing, laughing, shouting—



Hugh Hefner

"Hef, you the man!"

"You the mack daddy!"

"Hef, you been doin' this for a while!"

Buffy seems to have been a hit as Miss November. "Lemme get your autograph?"

"Buffeeeee!"

The girlfriends all hold hands, snaking like an anorexic elephant train through the crowd inside—full of white boys in jaunty hats and black guys in white tank tops and guys groining up against the behinds of girls with arms wrapped back around their necks.

"*It's just a vivrant thing,*" Q-Tip raps.

There's a special booth waiting for Hef and the girls in the center of the club, just beyond a Michael Jackson jacket suspended under a light. The champagne buckets and glasses are ready. The girlfriends do their boogie train all the way to the table; slide in, two and three on either side of their boyfriend.

Flash, flash.

Now Mark the bodyguard is doing disposable-camera duty. The girlfriends scooch in and do their Marilyn Monroe lips—pouty, trembly—

"Hey, wait!" A bushy-haired young woman in heavy clogs is trying to climb over the booth and slink down among the girlfriends. Mark grabs her, forcing her back over—she fights back.

"Hey, you can't handle me!" she screams. "Do you know who my father is?" She's embarrassed in front of her friends, whom she apparently wanted to impress. They're standing nearby.

Hef shrugs, holding a hand to his ear, pretending to be deaf (he actually is hard of hearing, in his right ear).

Cathi pouts, nestling against Regina. "They're always trying to get next to Hef."

"Look," go the mouths in the crowd, "it's Hugh Hefner."

Hef and the girls get up to dance.

The club has roped off an exclusive dance area for them, about eight by four, at the end of the table. Young men line up to watch.

"*It's just a vivrant thing,*" Q-Tip raps.

The girlfriends start moving, shaking, shimmying, tossing platinum hair, flashing fake diamonds, grinding tight asses.

Hef shuffles, in the middle of them all—just like he did on *Playboy After Dark* more than 30 years ago—a kind of bandleader keeping time with the music that got loosened up around the time of the frug.

All you real live niggas, throw ya hands up!

Hef throws his hands up in the air.

Hef shoves his hand down between Buffy's breasts.

The young men lining the ropes look stunned, like they've walked into their apartments and found all their furniture is missing.

Just then, a tall, rangy girl—beautiful and butch, in a baseball cap and jeans—jumps over the rope and starts "Yo, yo, what up"-ing Hef and the girlfriends. She slaps Hef five in the air.

"That's Amy, she used to be friends with the twins," says Katie excitedly.

Katie runs and jumps full on Amy's hips, waving her lollipop in the air; Amy bumps her about.

Back that ass up!

Buffy is backing into Amy.

Hef is dancing sandwiched by Regina and Buffy.

Hef is doing hip-hop moves, casting arms and fists around, anvil jaw held high in the air.

He looks absurd; like he's having a blast.

Like he's tired. Now he wants to sit down. Tina and some of the other girlfriends follow him. Back in the booth, they clink together glasses of champagne with splashes of pineapple juice (the help knew to have it ready for them), watermelon shots.

Now two young guys come and sit down, bowing with the respect you'd pay a mullah; they're allowed.

Hef writes me a note: "He just signed to record on the Backstreet Boys' label! He wants to perform for us! He's a fan."

Hef shrugs at me, smiling; he's not exactly sure, he says, why he appeals so to the hip-hop generation, but he isn't surprised, either. "They've all been waiting for me to come out and play!" he says.

"I can't believe what a *mack* he is," says a club kid from New York, watching.

Tina leans over and asks about my baby. "Have you had her Christmas pictures done at Sears yet? I love the backgrounds they have."

Buffy's dancing on the banquette, pumping a fist in the air, rapping, "*All you real live niggas!*"

Cathi dances at the end of the table—it's a sort of performance area where the girlfriends dance for Hef—jittering like a little girl's idea of what's sexy.

Everyone at the table is nuzzling one another.

Katie and Cathi are on the dance floor, humping each other.

"*Shake ya ass, watch yaself!*" says the music.

Katie straddles Buffy on the booth and they start tonguing each other. Katie bumps up and down on Buffy's lap. Cathi whips over and crouches between them, darting her tongue in and out of their mouths.

Buffy turns and looks at me. She's from Texas. "You know we're just playin', right?" she drawls.

Amy's on the dance floor burying her face in Tina's big fake breasts, which are wrapped tight in a leather corset. Tina touches her face maternally. Amy's so excited.

Hef's holding a hand to his good ear, t[rying] ing to hear Regina talk. "Come again?" says.

Regina yells, "I am living my dream!" H[ef] nods emphatically.

Biggie raps, "*Playboy Bunnies, those wan[na] money*."

Regina writes me a note: "I adore Hef don't have to dream anymore!"

Back at the Mansion, around two, in t[he] circular drive, before turning in for t[he] night, Hef tells Mark the bodyguard, "No we've got to get a checklist for things li[ke] the pineapple juice . . . "

Mark says, "Yes, sir, of course, sir."

The girlfriends yawn in the backgrou[nd] climbing up the stairs.

It's a quiet morning at the Mansion a[nd] Hef still hasn't come down. Oversize p[ool] beach balls float listlessly in the pool. He[ad] exotic birds scream with what sounds l[ike] rude laughter.

Joyce Nizzari, another secretary (and M[iss] December 1958), is giving me a tour of t[he] grounds. She's a woman in her 50s, da[rk] haired; wearing sweatpants, no makeup.

She says, "I don't have blond hair or l[ong] boobs and I still get to hang around."

When Hef was still with Kimberley, [he] replaced the sign in the drive, which sa[id] PLAYMATES AT PLAY, with a sign that sa[id] CHILDREN AT PLAY. Now the PLAYMATES s[ign] is back up.

"On any given Sunday the pool is fil[led] with half-naked ladies," Nizzari says, smili[ng].

She was in love with him once. "It was [in] Miami," she says. "I was at a dinner pa[rty] and I met Hef, and we went out and look[ed] at the stars. We kissed; I fell for him; I w[as] 17 then."

Hef was in his 30s; they dated for t[wo] years. Frank Sinatra once tried to steal [her] away.

Terry, Hef's woolly monkey, refuses [to] come down from her perch in a large e[lm] scowling.

Nizzari leads me through a door to [the] underground Grotto. It's steamy, be[ing] cleaned by a man with a can and hose.

Nizzari says, "My grandchildren ca[me] running out of here once when they sa[w] man get out of the pool naked. It was [Ar]nold Schwarzenegger."

"That would be my last day here, gett[ing] caught in the Grotto," says Bob C[ar]in, Hef's archivist. He is Mexican-Americ[an]. He started working here 25 years ago in [the] kitchen, and like many people around H[ef] he never left.

Now he works as Hef's clipping serv[ice]; every day he hands Hef a file of Playb[oy] news. "He doesn't really discuss it with m[e]

olin says, sitting back to read a newspaper. start looking through some of the more an 1,300 black bound volumes . . .

From No. 1: Hef's high-school cartoon, School Daze"—originally he wanted to be cartoonist.

"Hey look, fellas, hair!" It's a story line volving a girl's hair being forcibly clipped; other girl wearing a beard; cross-dressing. Huh—women—fooey!"

From No. 25: A letter, typed, single-aced, from Hef's mother to his third-grade acher, 1934: "He is unusually sen-ive and whether he has been ridi-led in front of the other children d is fearful of its being repeated what there is about it I do not ow . . . "

From No. 175: "Un homme qui it voyager!"—a clip from France. notos of Hef aboard *The Big Bun-* flanked by Barbi and a black nny with a power 'fro.

From No. 52: A letter to the ed-r from the first issue of *Playboy:* find your magazine really great, azy as crazy can get—crazy!"

Hef comes in, wearing his paja-as. "Can you believe this?" he asks.

We go into the library. He hands me a Diet Pepsi, draws the aperies, the way he likes it. "Is at all right for you?" he asks.

He sits down, leans forward in-nsely on a leather couch; there's ways something about him that's little tightly wound.

Pictures of himself with Kimber-y and their boys sit on the win-owsill behind him.

"Picasso had his Blue Period," begins. "And I am in my Blonde eriod." His warm rumbling voice reminiscent of Ronald Reagan's.

"When I came right off my mar-age to Kimberley at the beginning 1998," he says, "I was emotion-ly pretty beaten up. I had been orking hard trying to keep that arriage together, and it was not nybody's fault. . . . There wasn't anybody se. In contrast to what anyone would think out someone who has lived my lifestyle, I ade that commitment, and worked on it.

"But I wouldn't say marriage is the natur-state for me. And there are unique situa-ons here that might be difficult for a wom-n. We didn't live a typical private life, and imberley is a very private person. We start-d to curb the parties at her request. The ew Year's Eve party went from a pajama ngerie party to a formal black-tie event.

"I never cheated in the marriage. When look at it now it seems absolutely unbe-evable, but it wasn't difficult at the time. It was a period in which I felt a tremendous connection—I had had my stroke; I felt a touch on the shoulder in terms of mortality, and I have always felt a very special connection with my own childhood. . . . And there were the two boys, Marston and Cooper, who were like my brother and me. . . .

"But the reality of it all, and I am very much aware of it—I don't enjoy parenthood as such. I don't have a lot in common with children. I must say that in the early part of my second marriage I enjoyed it—in my first marriage my head was somewhere else completely. I really didn't want the children"—Christie and her brother, David, now a computer programmer in Northern California—"and didn't plan them, but I accepted it as simply a part of life. But parenthood is not a natural thing to me, and it wasn't to my parents, and I think you pass that on to some extent, uh . . .

"So what I discovered"—he brightens—"when I did come out of the marriage in a rather emotionally bruised state, was that there was this whole new generation of guys and girls waiting, as I've said before, waiting for me to come out and play. You can imagine what that meant to me." He pauses.

"I started going to the clubs, and I started getting this thing from strangers, guys coming up to me and saying, 'You're the man, you're the mack daddy!'—and I didn't know what the fuck that meant at the time. They had been waiting for me to come out."

He looks a bit reverent.

"And it was every generation from the teens on up," he says. "Early on I went out to a music party and Bob Dylan was there and the first words out of his mouth were 'You're my hero.' That's pretty sweet stuff.

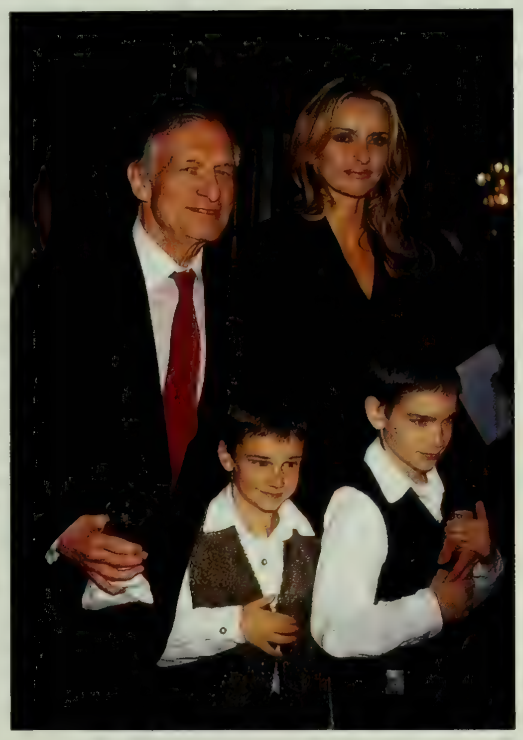
"And then one of the first parties I went to, I met Brande and something very special happened right away, and we started dating, and it was about a month later at the Garden of Eden that I met the twins. I saw the twins out there dancing together and thought, This is incredible, they are identical and very beautiful, and I invited them over to join me for a drink and we started getting on very well." At the time, they were college students.

"And then within two months they had moved in. Double your pleasure, double your fun." He chuckles. "Yes, if making love to two girls at the same time is a male fantasy, then if they are twins it just doubles—I don't know why, but it is true. And we just got on wonderfully well.

"I think the major concern there was since I was already in the beginning of a relationship with Brande, then how could that all work out? But it did, and I remember the first time we were all together Brande said, 'You really are the luckiest guy in the world.' And I believe I am. And that lasted for two years and we all became great friends. . . .

"This has been a whole transition into a life for me—the life I'm living now is like the life I was living before, in the 70s and early 80s, but times four. As wonderful and swinging as that time was, this is much more than that, because the attitudes towards *Playboy* and towards my life have taken another kind of step up. In other words the brand impact—being embraced by women—by the women's fashion magazines—fashion magazines doing photo shoots with me.

"Exactly what is true of the brand is true of my own personal life: all these young women have grown up seeing their fathers, brothers, and boyfriends all identifying with me in this very dramatic way. Young women in this post-politically-correct, postfeminist period, without the other kind of conflicts and hang-ups that were there in the 80s and



THE MONOGAMY EXPERIMENT
Hugh Hefner with his wife, Kimberley Hefner, and their two sons, Cooper and Marston, at the Waldorf-Astoria hotel in New York City for the 1998 National Magazine Awards. Hefner says he was faithful to his wife up until their separation. Kimberley and the boys now live next to the Playboy Mansion.

70s, now see me in this completely different kind of way. Women have embraced the rabbit.

"I was very gratified to see Sarah Jessica Parker wearing the Bunny pendant on the show. *Sex and the City* is my favorite show. They filmed an episode out here.

"Most of the girls I'm seeing now are girls who fantasized about being with me even before we met!" Hef says. He looks momentarily astounded at his own luck. "And each one of them has a fascinating story about the amount of time and trouble they took to meet me. In several of the cases, they're girls who've been here at the various parties and had their pictures taken with me, so that when we started going together they bring out these pictures of us together that I have absolutely no memory of.

"And it makes me feel not only most fortunate but also that the relationship is more important to them than might otherwise be the case because they went to all this time and trouble to sort of make it happen, whether it was conscious or unconscious. In Tina's case, for example, she never thought it would happen.

"She's the closest to me.... She's the oldest of the group, the mama hen. She hasn't been in *Playboy* yet, but she would like very much to be. I met her here at a 'Fun in the Sun' Sunday afternoon. No, I met her originally in January 2000 at the Garden of Eden with the twins and Brande, and she was there with her boyfriend, and she came up and introduced herself—or so she says. I have no memory of it at all!" He laughs.

"All of this"—his seven girlfriends—"has actually been going on a shorter time than I really fully realize—I guess it's all maybe just three or four months. One came and then another. It's all working out very well. I've created this incredible machine that brings to me the most beautiful young women in the world, and they come already wanting to be in the magazine or somehow a part of my life, so I think that my choices are a combination of what's available to me and where my fantasies are at. And my fantasies do come mostly from the movies—be that superficial, it's an ongoing thing, and these are the women that my life is filled with.

"*Manhattan* is one of my favorite films. Woody Allen is probably my favorite director. He's been here, he and his wife.

"I think I'm particularly fascinated with women also who, uh, are at a point in their life where it's all new and everything is possible to them—and to relive that through them is very much a part of how I manage to hold on to that attitude on my own.

"Of course, the girls don't even know half the time who Chaplin or Bogart is—the ones who do I'm most likely to be more emotionally connected to, like Tina. Regina, who has just joined us here in the last few weeks, uh, saw her very first black-and-white movie the other night.

"I say I'm in my Blonde Period—and there is something cute and sweet about the way they all have this kind of blonde-girl-next-door look.

"Is this the paradise I've been planning on? You betcha. But here's the surprise—this is what *they* want. I think one of the things that has great appeal to the women is that I have seven girlfriends. In my life at the Playboy Mansion now, this is something that has tremendous attraction, obviously for men, but also for a great many women too. This is a thing where the girls like to be there with one guy living with a bunch of girls. And, surprise, surprise, that's more of a revelation—simply the reverse, of a woman with a bunch of guys, that's easy to understand. But to literally, really want to be here because that's the situation—to be with me and a lot of girls. With a lot of these girls they have fantasized about being part of *this*."

He lets it sink in.

"It isn't politically correct to suggest so, but bisexuality is a choice and it is an adventure—and I think quite frankly the reality is, if we're really talking about nature, men and women can be turned on by a variety of things and the rest is culturally imposed. I've done it all, not including livestock." He does his Mr. Magoo. "No boundary uncrossed.

"And, also, the girls are not only attracted to the other girls—women enjoy, by and large, other women's company more than men. They have a lot in common. The girls get to do all kinds of other stuff together, they get to shop together. In other words, this relationship is more fun for them than, say, two or three couples going out together....

"There can be some territorial things between them—we're sorting through some of that right now—but mostly it's working out very well. I can't talk about how Tab A goes into Slot B—how can I really say what we do and be fair to the girls? They don't like to talk about that part of it. Let me just say that it's too good to be true—it's even better than people think! It's not like a Mormon marriage, where I go from house to house.

"We're all together most every night, and we watch TV together and watch movies together, and we play together. Who gets more and what kind of attention all depends on the girl. That's never been a problem with me. And now with Viagra you don't have to worry about the wood.

"I think I am a good lover. I've certainly had a lot of practice. Rehearsal is important. Being a good lover is the same thing as being a good lover in a nonsexual sense—listening, being responsive, talking about something besides yourself. I would like to believe that I have always been a class act...

"I will tell you, there are less inhibitions with younger women today, and that's wunnnderful," says Hef. "Women today are much more natural and less worried about what sex means, and that's certainly part of the whole hip-hop thing. Sex used to be perceived almost like religion, and it was codified and controlled by church and state. But good girls like sex, too—that's the key. What I've said all along is the major beneficiary of the sexual revolution is women, not men, because women have been forced to live in this very unnatural way, put on a pedestal, considered either the daughters of Eve or—either Madonna or whore, good girls or bad girls. You want to be with the bad girls before you get married and then marry a good girl. That whole tradition is so hurtful and so totally inappropriate for women.

"I don't ever want to get married again. It's all rooted in the idea of women as possession, women as a material thing. People project a lot of that into my life, but the truth is, I'm such a romantic, I wear my heart on my sleeve," he purrs.

"I started, you know, having multiple partner sex back in the 60s—it was very common throughout the second half of the 1970s for me to be in bed with six or eight people. Common. I needed a big bed. But it was also a time before AIDS in which swing parties were commonplace, Plato's Retreat was operating in New York, and it was a time of real sexual adventure and innocence. It was a time between the arrival of the birth control in 1960 and the arrival of AIDS in the early 1980s, a time of innocence that was almost like the Garden of Eden, and, like a lot of people, I explored a lot of sexual boundaries—but in a context and with a quality of participants that was unmatched anywhere," he adds.

"But things are even better now," says Hef. "The difference is I have seven girlfriends, but, you know, it isn't the number of participants that changed as much as it is an ongoing relationship, which is very, very nice. We do all kinds of wonderful things together. We go to Disneyland together. We go out to the movies, and we go out to the clubs and are always the very center of whatever's going on, wherever we are.

"Is polygamy the answer?" He smiles. "Well, I think it's one of the answers. There is no single answer. The answer is don't be so judgmental of people who have other answers than yours."

"With Hef," Katie says, "I don't think it has anything to do with being, like, overly into sex—he just loves women, he likes to have women around ... "

" ... Well, obviously he's not going to marry all of us ... ," says Cathi.

" . . . If any of these girls think he is going marry them, they're kidding themselves," ys Mary O'Connor, Hef's secretary of 26 ars, "and if they think any different, they n come and ask me about it . . . "

Kimberley Hefner sounds bitter, disap-)inted. "What would cheating have to do ith any of it? How about just a lack of timacy in a huge way?" she snaps. "My)ys' dad is missing out, big-time. It's his ss—it's such a huge, sad thing. His pri-ities are all messed up. Hef does what ef wants.

"The boys always say to me, 'Mommy, e're planning on having one girlfriend.'"

Random Harvest, made in 1942," Hef tells the crowd assembled for Classic lovie Night, "stars Greer Garson and Ron-d Colman. . . . Robert Redford called it one his favorite films of all time, and we're)out to see why . . . "

He's wearing pajamas. Before the film arts he always gives a little talk.

There's a seat waiting for him in the)nt row, between Tina and Tiffany, with card with his name on it; his bowl of)pcorn also has a card: HEF.

The screening room is filled with about) other people—Doc Saginor; bandleader ay Anthony, who was once Glenn Miller's umpet player; Robert Culp, the actor from *Spy;* Roberta Leighton, a former soap ac-ess; Richard Bann, a local, rabid film buff id writer. They've all just finished a buf-t—some bland meat and fish and vegeta-es on trays, and spongy cakes; Hef feeds em every week. Many of them live alone.

"Where are the other girls?" I whisper Doc.

"The stores must be open late," he mur-urs.

The film starts; it's an amnesia story. Ronald Colman can't remember that he was once married to Greer Garson—now posing on the sly as his secretary, waiting for him to snap out of it—and that he was fantastically happy with her. He's a man who can't see the woman right in front of him.

Throughout the screening, Tina has her head on Hef's shoulder (she's snoring lightly), while he holds Tiffany's hand on his other side.

"Everyone was amazed at the way she danced—she never danced before!" Hef exclaims of Greer Garson when the lights come up.

Everyone mills around and talks.

On the back porch, Robert Culp has broken away for a smoke.

"What knocks me for a loop about Hef," he says, "is the manner in which he has shifted our way of thinking in the second half of the 20th century on the single concept of consensual sex—sex between consenting adults.

"Until he came on the scene it was an unheard-of no-no to even discuss because it was thought of as being completely on the side of the vulgar.

"I guess the real question now is: Where do we go from here?"

A white rabbit hops across the lawn.

"Oh yeah," Culp says. "Hef put a whole lot of 'em around here, and they stay. I guess they know they're welcome."

That night, out at Barfly, Buffy sits alone in the booth watching Hef dance with the other girls. Tina's dancing with Regina; Cathi's throwing a leg over Katie; Hef is dancing behind Tiffany, squeezing her ass.

Before they left the house that night Hef told Tiffany she looked like she had on "Frankenstein monster boots." She told him, "It's rock 'n' roll style—you wouldn't know."

"Ah miss home, I miss all my friends," Buffy says. "It's hard for me sometimes. It gets boring—you can only shop so much."

Her eyes smolder, ringed with black make-up; she looks a little burned-out.

"But I can't complain too much," she says. "I've wanted to be in *Playboy* since I was, like, 13 years old. One day I came out and said, 'Mom, I'm gonna grace the pages of *Playboy* one day, you watch.' 'Cause I've always wanted to be a model and be an actress, and I've always said that *Playboy* was gonna be the stepping-stone for me, my ticket into Hollywood."

The girls on the dance floor are forming a writhing train with Hef as the center car.

"It's hard when you come from a small town and you don't know what to do and how to meet people and all. You need to be able to meet people, and you don't know where to go or what to do and then, sure enough, hey, what do you know. I'm here," Buffy says. "Pretty cool." She pulls down her white leather bra.

"You know, all my friends used to be, like, O.K., Buffy, whatever—and I'm like, You watch, I'll get there—and then when I actually did it they're like, Omigod, you said you would and you did! I never thought you wouldn't, but *golly!*" She smiles.

"*When you're out makin' love, when you're out makin' love . . .,*" the music goes.

The girls are surrounding Hef like a life-support system.

He does his shuffle, smiling, thumbs up.

"But it's a lot of fun," Buffy says. "You know, my magazine sold over 900,000 copies? That's very high. It was neat. In Texas they're still sold out. It makes me happy, it makes me feel good, 'cause I accomplished something—I knew I could and I always wanted to do it and you accomplish that goal and—you know, it's pretty neat." □

Paul Guillaume

ONTINUED FROM PAGE 252 Domenica found ew ways to humiliate him. She made him ear overalls to protect his one suit, and when e got to be as tall as she, she made him wear n old camel-hair overcoat of hers, which but-ned up the wrong way for a man.

One dire day, Domenica's resentment of an-Pierre finally curdled into rage. She at-cked him for disgracing her house. He was ot even her or Paul Guillaume's son, she id, adding that his real mother, according to rystram, "must have ended up on the streets ter being knocked up by some wretched elivery boy." He was a foundling she had dopted out of kindness. In despair Jean-ierre fled to the apartment of Walter's son, acques. He worked briefly in a Paris night-club, in a pharmaceutical factory, and as a film extra. In 1955 he enlisted in the army as a parachutist and was soon commissioned. Jean Walter saw him off to war in Algiers and made him promise that he would come back and live at home after his military service. His thoughtful mother reportedly asked her friend General Massu, who was in command of the troops in Algiers, to expose Jean-Pierre to active combat and make a man of him. Since she sent him no money, he was reduced to bouncing checks and stealing 80,000 francs from the regimental mess—transgressions which would later be used to justify the conspiracy she mounted against him.

Domenica would always take much too much credit for preserving the integrity of her first husband's collection—"It is my raison d'être," she used to say. In fact, she had never liked the *art nègre,* which had been Guillaume's first love. After promising his collection of tribal art to the Louvre, she auctioned it off. No less regrettable is the absence from the collection of de Chirico, whom Guillaume had helped discover. Domenica was legally entitled to sell whatever she wanted, but one wishes she had deaccessioned some of her husband's mistakes—those late Renoir nudes painted in shades of apricot jam, or the pretty-pretty Marie Laurencins, or the ghastly Goergs—instead of eliminating his best modernist paintings, including all but one of his great early Picassos and his two most important Matisses, the huge *Bathers by a River* (1909–16), now in Chicago's Art Institute, and *The Piano Lesson* (1916), now in New York's Museum of Modern Art.

As it stands today, the collection com-

Paul Guillaume

memorates Guillaume as a man of discernment but hardly as the avant-garde pioneer he prided himself on being. True, his widow would later buy some fine Cézannes, including the beautiful *Still Life with Apples and Biscuits,* for which she paid a record price of just under $100,000 at auction in 1952, thereby tripling or quadrupling the value of her other Cézannes. However, the second-rate Impressionists, among them a dubious Renoir, which she acquired around the same time, raise questions about her discrimination. As for the schlock realist Bernard Lorjou, whom Domenica tried her best to promote, his work did her walls as much credit as a Leroy Neiman might today.

Although she had supposedly put a stop to her extracurricular affairs, Domenica embarked, in 1955, on a romance with a mysterious doctor in his 40s named Maurice Lacour—as cold-blooded and self-seeking a creature as herself. Lacour came from a notoriously reactionary family. He and his father had both been members of a sinister, extreme-right-wing group known as the Cagoules, and he continued to meddle in Fascist intrigues. His medical credentials were equally disturbing. He claimed to be a homeopathic practitioner, a psychiatrist, an acupuncturist, a "hypnoanalyst," and a guardian of "the secrets of Siberian shamanism." The mystical mumbo jumbo was rumored to be a cover for drugs and other shenanigans, which made this Doctor Feelgood very popular with rich, frustrated women. And, sure enough, the drugs he prescribed for Domenica alleviated the pain of rheumatoid arthritis, which would eventually cripple her. She was soon so hooked on Lacour's services that she arranged for him to move into the building on Avenue Gabriel and travel with her and her husband on their seasonal moves to a chalet in Megève, the Hôtel Mamounia in Marrakech, and the Hôtel du Cap in Antibes. Jean Walter objected ("I'd willingly throw him out of the window," he told friends), but to humor his wife—or, more likely, to ward off her terrifying rages—he agreed to the arrangement and even allowed Lacour to treat him for his cardiovascular ailments. Walter's chauffeur later reported that Lacour's medications had made his boss so anemic that his blood pressure dropped to a dangerously low level.

Domenica also became very friendly with a tantalizingly rich philanthropist named Margaret Biddle. Biddle, who had been born around 1900, was the only daughter of Colonel William Thompson, a mining promoter of genius from Alder Gulch, Montana. After his death in 1930, she inherited a major slice of the Newmont Mining Corporation, one of the largest producers of lead and zinc in the United States. Her mother had brought Margaret up to be "a perfect lady," and she had succeeded almost too well. Impeccably dressed by Balenciaga, nicely jeweled by Cartier, and installed in one of the most stylish houses in Paris—the work of the celebrated decorator Stéphane Boudin—Biddle belonged to a tight little band of expatriate millionairesses who worshiped at the shrine of Parisian chic. Unlike most of her ilk, she was a nice enough woman and no fool. She had two children by her first husband, Theodore Schulze, and none by her second, Anthony Drexel Biddle, a former U.S. ambassador to Poland. Jean Walter had become Margaret Biddle's business partner when the Newmont Mining Corporation acquired 49 percent of the Zellidja Mining Corporation's shares.

Domenica seldom let Biddle out of her sight. The two women talked of launching a Paris newspaper together. They patronized the same couturiers as well as the antiques dealers and decorators who were advising Biddle on the Vermeil Room—an antechamber given over to a stunning display of silver-gilt beakers and dishes—which she was presenting to the White House. They also went to the ballet and opera together. On June 8, 1956, Domenica and her brother, Jean Lacaze, took Biddle and Lacour to a gala at the Opéra in honor of the King and Queen of Greece. Biddle seemed in excellent health and spirits. It was all the more shocking, then, that after returning to her house on the Rue las Cases —escorted, possibly, by Lacour—she fell into a coma and died of a cerebral hemorrhage. Her office was ransacked and a dossier stolen, so foul play was suspected, but no action was taken. Three years later, when Dr. Lacour was accused of conspiring to murder Domenica's adopted son, there would be an investigation into Margaret Biddle's death and an autopsy. Nothing criminal emerged.

Jean Walter prided himself on being a self-made man. His family were Mennonites, and he had inherited little from his father, a small-time builder, but puritanical principles and a passion for work. He had made his first fortune as an architect of hospitals, housing developments, and luxury apartment buildings, before becoming an even more successful mining magnate. To give other poor kids a start in life, Walter set up a foundation which made 300 annual grants of 20,000 francs each to young men "with a taste for adventure." The more enterprising ones were then given larger grants and, eventually, jobs in the Zellidja Mining Corporation. Walter hoped that the children of his first marriage (a son an two daughters) would prove as much of credit to him as he had proved to his e emplary father, and in return for generou settlements he asked them to cede the shares in the Zellidja corporation to h foundation. The daughters—one of the the wife of Philippe Lamour, a brilliant e trepreneur whom Walter had appointed the Zellidja board—would do so and live regret it. The son, Jacques, who had spe much of his life in Morocco directing th mine, was more obdurate. He retained h share. Domenica was devoid of phila thropic spirit, but she had nothing again these dispositions. She would later manip late them to her advantage.

Events would all too soon play into D menica's hands. On June 11, 1957, she ar Jean Walter, accompanied by Lacour, dro from their country house in Dordives lunch at nearby Souppes-sur-Loing, whe Walter planned to go fishing. After parkin the car, he crossed the busy Route Nationa 7 to buy a newspaper and was blindside by a car. The impact threw Walter into th air, and he came down heavily on his hea cracking his skull. He was still alive whe Domenica and Lacour ran out of the re taurant. Lacour took charge. Weakened b a recent heart attack, Walter died whi being attended by him in the ambulanc Inevitably, there was talk. Walter had bee much loved, and Domenica's affair wi the creepy Cagoulard doctor was comm knowledge.

The widow went fast-forward into actio A day or two after Walter's death, sh and her elegant, obedient brother, accomp nied by his secretary and Dr. Lacour, a rived at the Zellidja offices at a time whe there was nobody around but a doorma They shut themselves in Walter's sanctu and literally took over. A few weeks late Domenica came up with an unconvinci testamentary letter, supposedly written b Jean Walter, but probably written by he (Their handwriting was very similar, an she had often forged his signature o checks.) The letter dismissed his truste son, Jacques, and son-in-law Philippe L mour from the board of the well-endowe foundation, in which Walter had taken much pride, and appointed Lacour, who he had loathed, in their place. The devio doctor turned out to have political aspir tions. In his new capacity, he proposed philanthropic enterprise—a dormitory f Algerian students at the Cité Universitai in Paris. This project would promote h prospects in a forthcoming election an also, it was rumored, provide a cover f drug trafficking. Nothing came of it.

Now that Jean-Pierre's principal prote tor was out of the way, Domenica and h

ver decided to have her adopted son mur-
red. He was co-heir to the Guillaume for-
ne and collection, and—who knew?—he
it might want to assert his rights. Jean-
erre was also inconveniently close to
alter's children, who hated their step-
other for having cheated them out of
ich of their inheritance. Given Lacour's
ntacts with militant fanatics, he was
ll placed to find a gun for hire. He ap-
oached a friend by the name of Armand
agescas, who was the managing direc-
of the right-wing magazine
rs de France, and explained
him that it was their patri-
c duty to eliminate such an
desirable creature as Jean-
erre. Magescas was most
commodating. Far from be-
g the least bit shocked at
idea, it turned out that he,
), had a notoriously unsatis-
tory son. He said he had
t the right man for the job:
ormer Resistance hero, the
ich-bemedaled Comman-
nt Camille Rayon, who had
n fame during the war as
ne Archduke."

Rayon had recently opened
ish restaurant in Antibes,
Maison des Pêcheurs, and
s in desperate need of ex-
backing. He was delighted
meet Lacour. The doctor
imed to be acting on be-
lf of a very powerful family,
ose disreputable young son
s such a crook, such a dis-
ace to his parents, his coun-
, and the army, that he did
t deserve to live. The blood
oney would be 10 million
ncs (about $24,000 at the
ne). If one can believe Ra-
n, which is not always pos-
le, he was horrified at the
tion of killing a young para-
utist who had been fight-
g for his country in Algeria.
owever, instead of reporting
matter to the police, he had
cided to string Lacour along while he
orked out a way of exploiting the situation
his own advantage. He requested an ad-
nce of 3 million francs on a payment of
million francs, plus a further 20 million
ncs for a mortgage on his restaurant. La-
ur made a counteroffer of a total of 30
illion francs. The haggling continued. Al-
ough as yet unaware of the principals'
entity, Rayon realized that, whoever they
re, they could not afford a scandal and
uld pay to avoid one. And so he agreed
go along with Lacour's plan without any
tention of acting on it.



MOMMY DEAREST
Domenica Walter, who had plotted first to have her adopted son murdered and then to have him imprisoned, speaks calmly to reporters in a hotel room in Paris in 1959.

For as long as Jean-Pierre was serving in the army, the murder was to take place in Algiers. After his demobilization, the venue was switched to Paris, where the victim was staying with Jacques Walter while training to be an airline steward at Orly airport. Rayon came up with various scenarios. A hunting accident at Philippe Lamour's country estate—too dicey. Drowning at sea—too complicated. They finally agreed in January 1958 that Rayon would tail Jean-Pierre as he drove back from a training session at Orly, and find a pretext for intercepting and killing him. As a precaution, Rayon had asked an old friend from his Resistance days, Alexandre Trucchi, to accompany him as a witness.

Then, instead of actually doing away with Jean-Pierre, they took him to dinner and convinced him that he was in mortal danger, and that his only hope of surviving and making some money was to go along with Rayon's plan of a simulated abduction and murder. Jean-Pierre finally agreed, on condition that Jacques Walter and Philippe Lamour approved of the scheme. They did. The following day Rayon consulted a close friend of his, the prominent Gaullist lawyer René Moatti, who also gave his approval. However, now that Rayon knew who was involved, he got greedy. Why shouldn't he shake down Domenica's brother, Jean Lacaze, for millions of francs?

Rayon and Trucchi went ahead and "abducted" Jean-Pierre—that is to say, they registered him under a false name at the Hôtel Claridge. Twenty-four hours later, Rayon met Lacour by arrangement outside the *Figaro* newspaper building and informed him that he had had Jean-Pierre strangled and thrown into the Seine. As proof, he handed over the "dead man's" revolver and identification papers. Rayon was shivering so badly with fright that Lacour had to get him a tranquilizer from a drugstore. The gallant go-between seems finally to have realized that he had double-crossed some very dangerous people. "Bravo, Commandant," Lacour said. "You have done your country a great service. I will run and get you your money." Later that afternoon Lacour handed over four million francs, and the following day a slightly smaller sum, all in old bills. He promised to arrange the mortgage payments later in the year in installments of 10 million francs. Only then did Rayon and Jean-Pierre take the Blue Train to Antibes.

Jacques Walter, who was kept informed of every move, let a few days pass before informing Domenica, via her brother, that Jean-Pierre had disappeared. She did not alert the police—"Useless," she said. Instead she took the more cautious step of notifying a highly placed friend in the Ministry of the Interior. The following day, February 7, Jean-Pierre Walter's family gathered for the transfer of his body from Fontainebleau to a Paris cemetery. Philippe Lamour took advantage of the ceremony to inform them (Domenica was not present) that Lacour had paid a hired gun 10 million francs to murder Jean-Pierre, and that the plot had gone wrong.

Three days later, on February 10, Maître Moatti convened a meeting at which Jean-Pierre formally accused Lacour of plotting his death—a charge that was immediately submitted to the public prosecutor. Over dinner that same evening, Jacques Walter informed Domenica's brother that her son

was in fact very much alive. As a result of Jean-Pierre's charges, detectives appeared at his mother's apartment and took Lacour away for questioning. Domenica was questioned separately at home. Both claimed that, far from being guilty of plotting a murder, they were being set up by Jean-Pierre and Rayon, who, they claimed, were crooks and blackmailers.

A judge by the name of Batigne was put in charge of the case, and for the next eight months he presided over an exhaustive investigation. Apart from Jean-Pierre and the Walter family, most of the people involved turned out to be venal or untruthful or both. Moatti, who was acting for Rayon, did what he could to muddy the waters. Mainly, he drew public attention to Lacour's possible involvement in the deaths of Margaret Biddle and Jean Walter. But, like most of the people connected to the case, the lawyer had his own agenda, though what exactly it was—beyond earning a very fat fee and advancing his political career—is unclear. Although two other criminal investigators arrived at radically different conclusions, Judge Batigne finally dismissed the charges. There simply wasn't enough hard evidence to support an indictment. However, that was by no means the end of the affair.

After the failed assassination attempt, one might have assumed that Domenica and her henchmen would leave Jean-Pierre in peace. Not at all. In her determination to disinherit him and if possible revoke his adoption, Domenica had yet another go at destroying him. This time she left the dirty work to her slave brother, Jean Lacaze, instead of Lacour. Once again the plot, which involved suborning Jean-Pierre's dazzlingly pretty, awesomely stupid mistress—a call girl named Maïté (short for Marie-Thérèse) Goyenetch—would blow up in Domenica's face. After being offered roughly $30,000 by Lacaze to falsely accuse Jean-Pierre of living on her immoral earnings, Maïté did indeed go to the police—not to implicate her lover but to accuse Lacaze of trying to bribe her. As a result, detectives tapped the telephones of Domenica and Lacaze, who was promptly arrested and jailed.

Although the first scandal—"L'affaire Lacour," as it came to be known—was downplayed by the press, the second scandal, referred to as "L'affaire Lacaze," caused a public furor which would last for more than six months and recycle the dirt from the previous case. Lacaze was soon released from jail on grounds of ill health. Domenica and Lacour prudently stayed away at the Hôtel Mamounia in Marrakech. Judge Batigne was brought back into the case to start yet another investigation. Maïté's pretty face was emblazoned on the front page of nearly every French newspaper.

As more and more marginal characters became involved and new charges and countercharges were made, the plot did not just thicken; it coagulated. The climax came when Domenica and Lacour returned from Marrakech and told a lot of flagrant lies at a press conference at the Ritz. Once again they claimed that Jean-Pierre was the villain and that the whole matter was an elaborate hoax on his part to extort money from his mother. This time Judge Batigne believed the son and not the mother, and Lacour was sent to prison, where he remained for about six months. Thanks to powerful friends and lawyers, Domenica managed to stay out of jail.

In the end, a deus ex machina materialized in the form of André Malraux, minister of culture in Charles de Gaulle's newly constituted government. An old friend of Domenica's, Malraux was eager to solve her problems, and even more eager to acquire her collection for the nation. Why not kill these two birds with one stone—prevail upon the appropriate division of the Ministry of Justice to drop all the charges in exchange for a gift of the paintings to the Louvre? There was only one obstacle. Malraux's arrangement smacked of the bad old days of the Fourth Republic, when the government had been rife with corruption. De Gaulle and his wife, Yvonne, stood for a new morality, in which rich people were no longer above the law. In accord with Gaullist virtue, therefore, the collection had to be sold—not given—to France. And sold it was, for a fraction of its real value. Malraux offered Domenica the Legion of Honor, but to her credit she refused it, saying, "That bit of red ribbon can do as much to ruin a woman's getup as the wrong hat."

Since the judge was denied the prospect of prosecuting the culprits, the whole truth will never be known. Otherwise the principals in the case got pretty much what they wanted. Details of the settlement were never divulged. All we know for certain is that the charges against Domenica and her brother were dropped. As for Lacour, after his release from jail he was soon kicked out by Domenica. He took up with a ravishing Guadeloupean actress, Judith Aucagne, who soon became his wife. (At the celebrations for the independence of Algeria in 1962, Lacour and his wife would be seated in the front row of the presidential box.)

As soon as the scandal died dow Jean-Pierre became a journalist a photographer and went to work for *Pa Match*. Despite all that had happene Domenica went ahead and tried to ha him fired, but Jean Prouvost, the own rallied to his side, and he went on to ha a successful career as a freelance pr photographer for *L'Express* and other p pers. He settled down, married a Dut girl, and had a daughter. And then, 1979, Jean-Pierre decided to make a n life for himself in America. He marri an American woman, had two more ch dren, and became a farmer. He also to up flying and bought himself a plane. currently lives in a small town in No Carolina but contemplates retiring to Fran For someone who had been so crue treated by an adoptive mother and h been the innocent victim of an enormo public scandal, Jean-Pierre remained s gularly free of grudges. When, some ye after the *affaire,* he was told that Dome ca was lonely and wanted to see him, paid her a visit. It turned out that all s really wanted from him was a repudiati of his adoption in exchange for cash. Af Domenica's death, he would finally inhe a portion of his patrimony. I say patrim ny because Jean-Pierre is convinced th he is Paul Guillaume's son—there is a c tain physical resemblance—but he has n er been able to establish the identity of real mother.

As for the Walter family, they sold t Zellidja mines to the King of Morocco a surprisingly large sum, considering th had been virtually emptied of lead. a result the town of Bou Beker, which Je Walter had conjured out of the dese once again became nomads' land.

Domenica's looks were fading fast, a she became a martyr to arthritis. Her cha feur complained of having to drive her to the Place Pigalle at night to buy coca and opium—balm for the pain which h reduced her fingers to shriveled claws. D menica replaced Lacour with someone w was seemingly more respectable, Jean B ret, a Communist art critic who wrote so not very distinguished books about Pica and other artists associated with the Co munist Party.

Meanwhile, Jean Lacaze had suffered severe stroke and fallen even further un his sister's control. A drooling wraith, was occasionally glimpsed being push around in a wheelchair by a little old lad pudgy and lame but quite stylish. Dome ca! When she died in 1977 at the age of the Guillaume collection—what was left it—finally took its place on the walls of Musée de l'Orangerie. Ironically, the o real winner in this very, very French st was France. □

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Michael Lutin tells Pisceans to indulge their madness but stay out of jail



Ruth Bader Ginsburg

PISCES FEB. 19–MARCH 20

It can be annoying when New Age gurus start preaching to you about the virtues and rewards of following your bliss. While they are correctly referring to the highest and most evolved way to respond to Neptune's transit of your solar 12th house, there are other, more mundane factors to consider as well. You don't exactly live in a political vacuum, and your current bosses can be very uncompromising. Unfortunately, while your integrity is a quality you can someday proudly take to your grave, you can't always take it to the bank.



Kate Hudson

ARIES MARCH 21–APRIL 19

Don't think the good Lord has it in for you just because your ruling planet has recently taken a beating from Uranus and Saturn. A nice healthy fight for survival can get the blood pumping through your veins and fill your lungs with oxygen. Besides, according to some people, stress can actually work as an aphrodisiac. Putting your whole heart into whatever or whoever happens to be your craze at the moment not only will distract you from your fear of bankruptcy but also will lead you straight to the solutions you have convinced yourself do not exist.



Emmitt Smith

TAURUS APRIL 20–MAY 20

It feels good when people praise you for your loyalty, but when they turn around and accuse you of being a narrow-minded, controlling bore, that hurts, no matter how much of a good sport you try to be. If you have become disillusioned in relationships over the past couple of years, you need to understand that you were born with the sign of Scorpio in your solar 7th house. While that often leads you into sexy liaisons with mysterious and exciting individuals, you usually end up giving away too many of your secrets too soon. From now on, if you know 10 tricks, do just 8 or 9.



Elizabeth Hurley

GEMINI MAY 21–JUNE 21

While you may still be suffering a few remaining pangs of grief over a lost relationship or agonizing over one you've decided to keep, you can finally take a much more positive attitude now that Jupiter is moving rapidly forward in your sign. There's more good astrological news: Mercury, your ruling planet, will be moving back and forth through your 9th house for the entire month, and that's always an up. If you have to go to the dentist, find one who will give you laughing gas. If there were ever a moment to giggle through your pain, this is it.



Henry David Thoreau

CANCER JUNE 22–JULY 22

To look at you now, one would never believe that you were once a docile, domesticated homebody. Back in the old days, you did a great job of remaining true to the stereotype of your traditional, family-oriented sign, smiling for the holiday pictures while secretly gritting your teeth and telling yourself that you felt content. That was before Uranus dropped a bomb in your 8th house and you found yourself suddenly aflame with the creativity and passion you thought you had packed away in the attic in Grandma's trunk. It's fun to be bad, though, isn't it?



Yves Saint Laurent

LEO JULY 23–AUG. 22

Only a Leo would have the strength, fortitude, and panache to suffer blows from all sides, the way you've been doing, and still come out looking like you just had your hair done. Considering the cosmic battering you've been receiving from Mars, Uranus, and Saturn, you're doing miraculously well. If you ever feel like giving in and pigging out, try putting a nice color picture of Saint Sebastian on your refrigerator door. That should inspire you to hang in there. And if you don't know who Saint Sebastian was, he was a guy who could take it all with a smile.



Louis XIV

VIRGO AUG. 23–SEPT

Even if your 6th house has dominion over your life these you can't possibly spend every waking moment slaving away at your litt or obsessing over each bowel spasm. If you are a highly evolved Virg must try to remove yourself from the pressures of mundane work, ge of the death anxiety that plagues us all, and retreat to your cell to me If, on the other hand, you are not all that highly evolved, you will still bly need to sneak away for the occasional puff of escapist fantasy. D coffee breaks only, that is.



Ang Lee

LIBRA SEPT. 23–OCT. 23

Once you successfully maneuver yourself through a few final spine-chilling financial skirmishes, you'll be flying along again, ecstatically h and wondering why the devil you spent so many months tearing you out and worrying about taxes, property values, markets, and whateve kept you staring at the ceiling in the middle of the night. Astrologically ing, one could say that the completion of a fixed planetary opposition i 2nd and 8th houses marks the end of a long and scary fiscal crisis. One also say you've finally grown up.



Laura Bush

SCORPIO OCT. 24–NO

While Mars is completing its transit through your sign and er your solar 2nd house, there's no sense growling and snarling your way th the month. Why not channel all that creative energy into your career, when all is said and done, means more to you than anything (or ar else in the entire world? If you can manage to be the soul of profess ism, the money will start rolling in. Since you get turned on only whe are betting on yourself against impossible odds, this is your chance t some true Scorpio fun.



Ben Stiller

SAGITTARIUS NOV. 22–DEC. 21

Have you been feeling as trapped and desperate as a caged animal? Calm yourself. If you think you're going out of your mind, remembe your incarceration has been self-imposed and largely in your own head all of your Sagittarian brothers and sisters, you have been experienci transit of a 12th-house Mars, which has been made unusually horribl square to Saturn and Uranus. You will be fine if you bear in mind t soon as Mars bursts into Sadge—which should be any minute now— forget you even have a dark side.



Mary J. Blige

CAPRICORN DEC. 22–JA

When Capricorns ask astrologers, "When is it going to be they want to know when the pressure will let up. Living under Saturn nerve-racking, like listening to Big Ben chime in your ear every 15 m to remind you that time is running out. For some reason, you give y endless lists of things to do by this afternoon, next week, or your 50th day. If relaxation makes you itchy because you're not being productiv stop asking when it will be over, because even peace and quiet will *you* out.



Alice Neel

AQUARIUS JAN. 20–FEB. 18

Now that Uranus in Aquarius has completed a T square with Saturn and Uranus in your 4th and 10th houses, you can always blam astrology and say you had permission from the cosmos to take out yo trations and uncertainties on loved ones, co-workers, and friends. Sinc primary relationships are governed by the sign on your solar 7th hou have probably been especially hard on any Leos who happened to cro path. Don't worry, though. When the rage passes and the panic disa you can laugh and deny everything.

To hear more about what's happening in your horoscope—and everyone else's—listen to Michael Lutin weekly by calling 1-900-28V-FAI on a Touch-Tone phone. Cost: $1.95 per minute. If you are under 18, you need parental permission.


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TOM GREEN

As host of a subversive MTV show, Tom Green installed a papier-mâché sculpture of his parents in flagrante delicto on their own suburban front lawn, and even mined his own battle with testicular cancer for laughs. On the eve of his ever imminent marriage to Drew Barrymore and the release of his directorial debut, next month's *Freddy Got Fingered,* Green reflects on his fear of angry bees, his admiration for Tom Brokaw, and his certainty that Sammy Hagar has ruined Journey



What is your idea of perfect happiness?
Being able to feel comfortable and happy whenever you are a home. Also, having the ability to fly just by flapping your arm really hard. If I could do that I would be happy.

What is your greatest fear?
I used to always think that it was to go parachuting. But my fiancée recently helped me conquer that fear, so now I am most afraid of bees . . . angry bees.

Which historical figure do you most identify with?
See, my problem is I can't really remember that many historical figures, because I'm stupid. But if I was to answer off the top of my head, I would have to say I relate most to Thomas Jefferson, because like him I will also never tell a lie.

Which living person do you most admire?
Tom Brokaw, because he's so smart.

What is your favorite journey?
I liked the one with Steve Perry. They were never the same after Sammy Hagar came on.

On what occasion do you lie?
As I already explained, I'm like Thomas Jefferson.

What is your greatest regret?
Growing up in Canada, like most kids I was into steeplechas I honestly feel that if I had never quit I could have been one of the best.

What or who is the greatest love of your life?
Drew.

If you could change one thing about your family, what would it be?
I would probably give my brother breast implants.

What is your favorite occupation?
When I was a kid I always wanted to be a college professor, but now I'm quite happy working as a gross-out comic.

What do you most value in your friends?
They've all got Sony PlayStations and I don't.

Who are your favorite writers?
Franklin W. Dixon, George Stephanopoulos, Farley Mowat, Eminem, William Shakespeare (but only that one about twins), the lady who writes *Harry Potter,* Mark Twain, Albert Einstein, and Samuel Clemens.

Who is your favorite hero of fiction?
It's a toss-up for me between *The Greatest American Hero* and *Last Action Hero.*

What are your favorite names?
Derek, Shawn, Glenn, Phil, and Soleil Moo Frye.

What is it that you most dislike?
Cancer.

How would you like to die?
I want to get hit by a bus.

What is your motto?
"Look both ways before you cross the street."

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEPHEN DANELIAN

Coast-to-Coast Best-Seller*

*Los Angeles Times *The New York Times (Expanded List)

orgeous." –Los Angeles Times

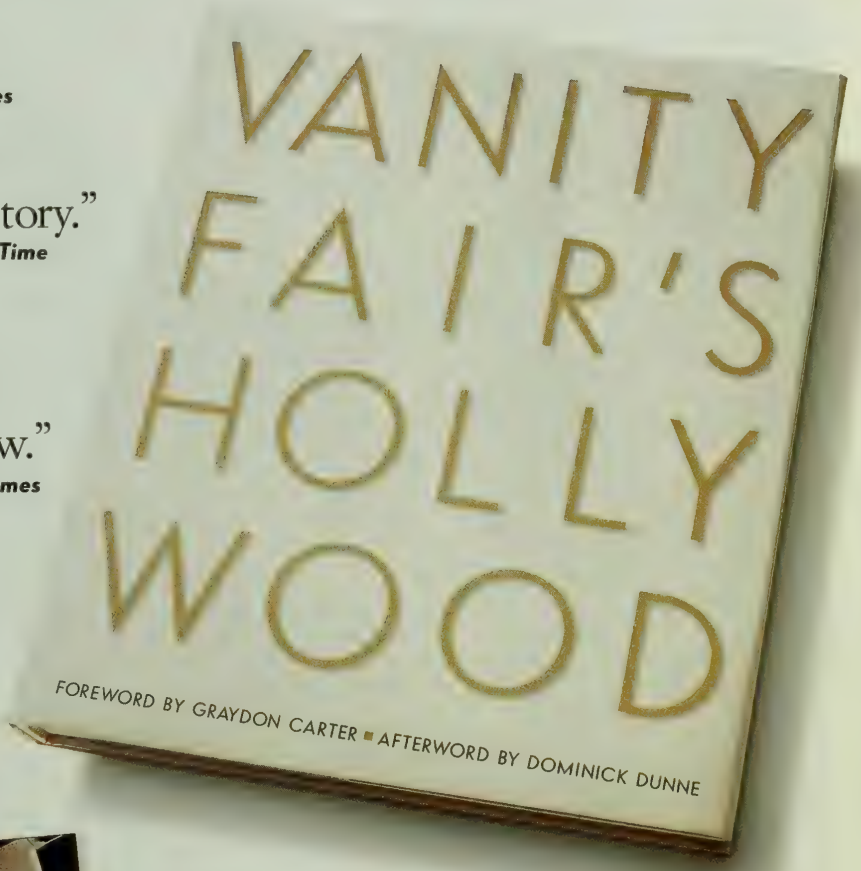
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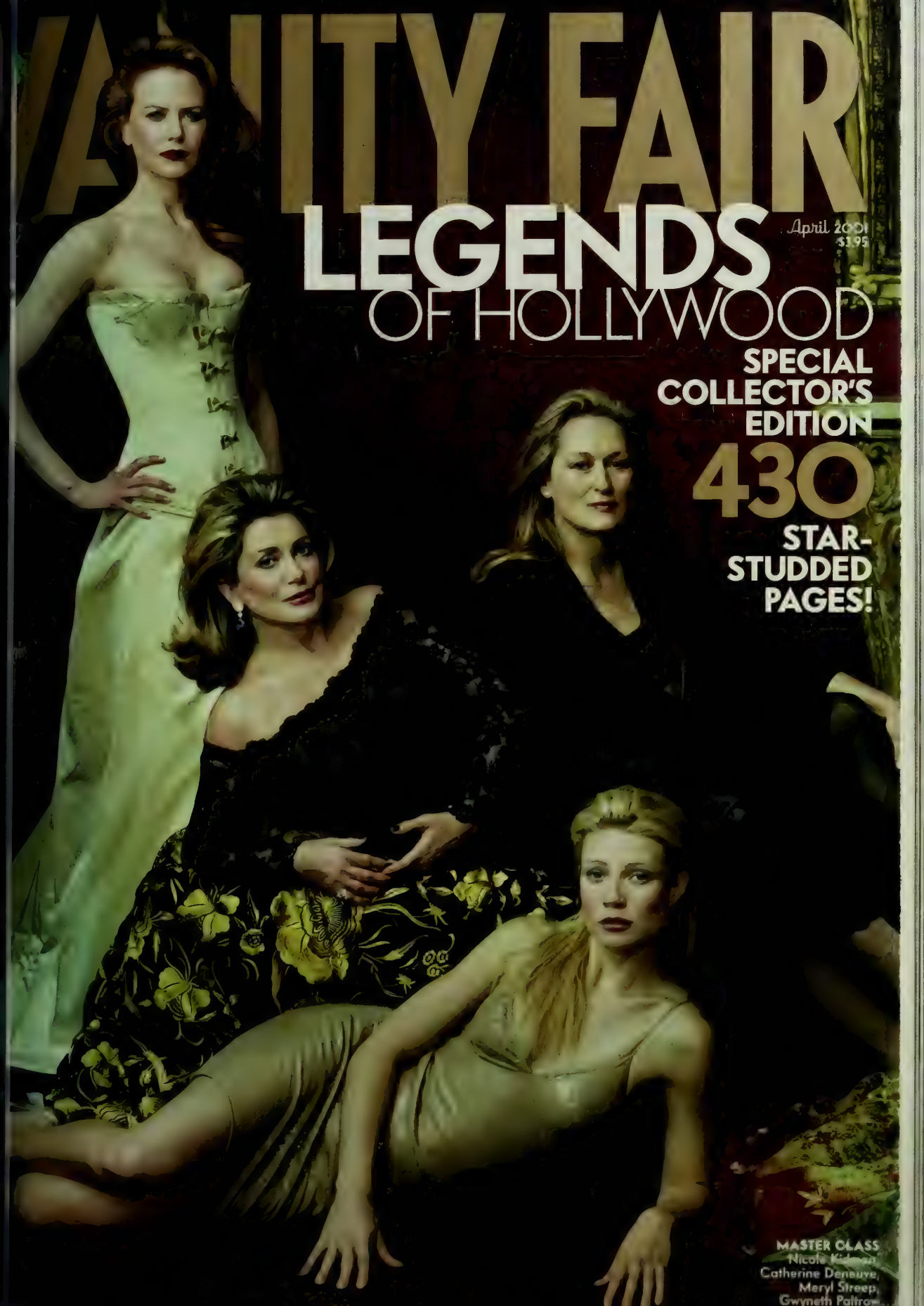
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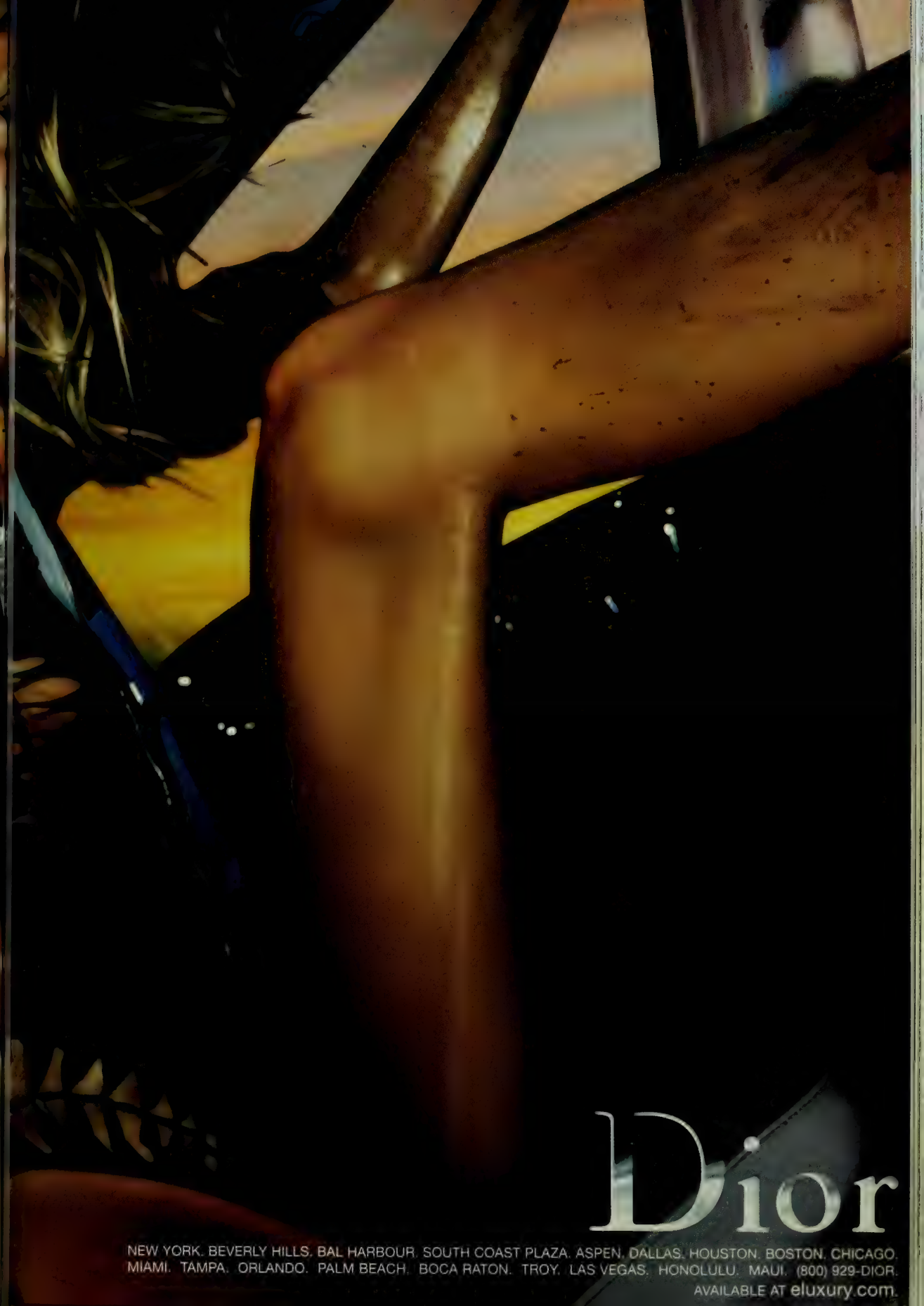
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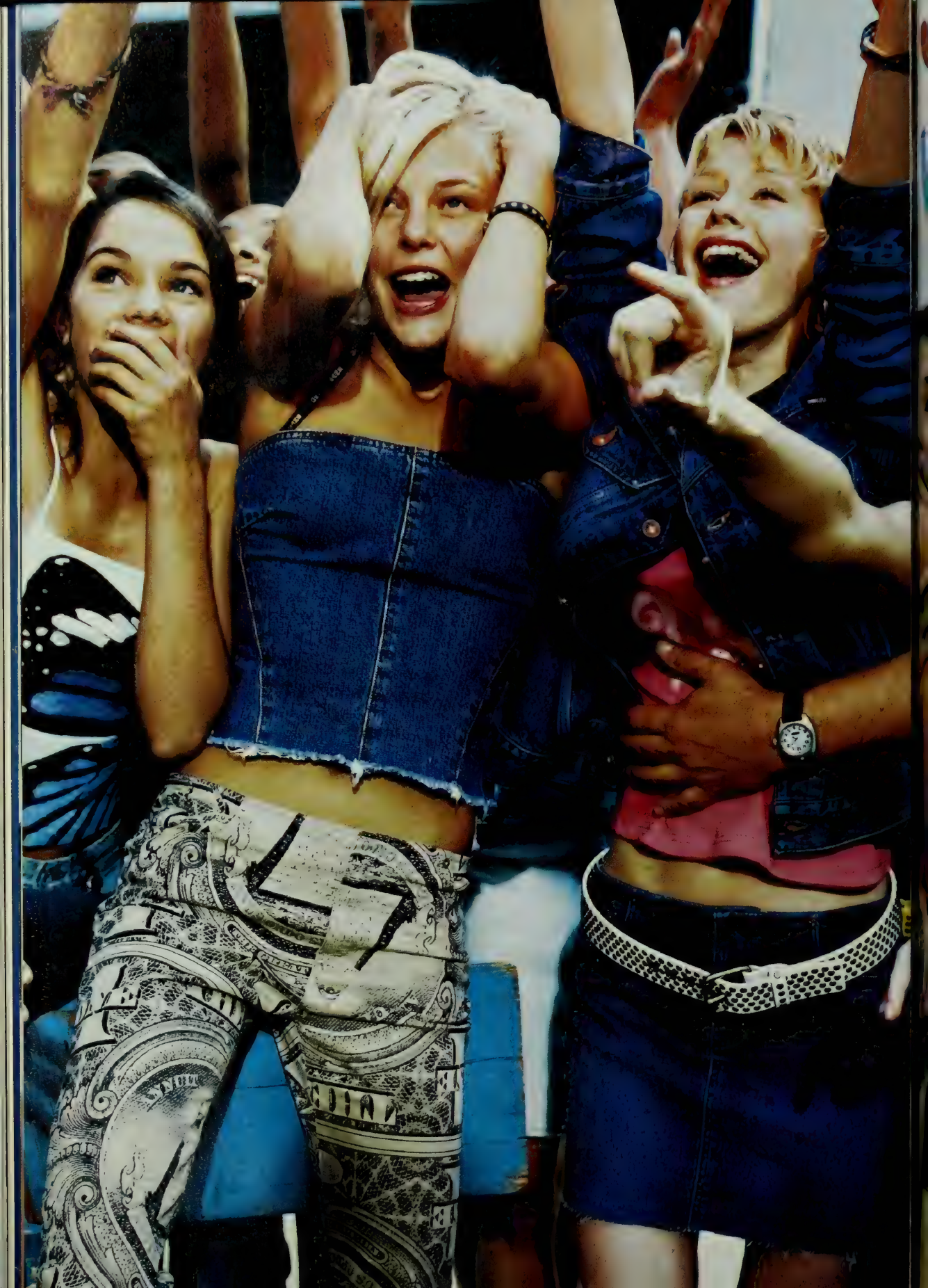

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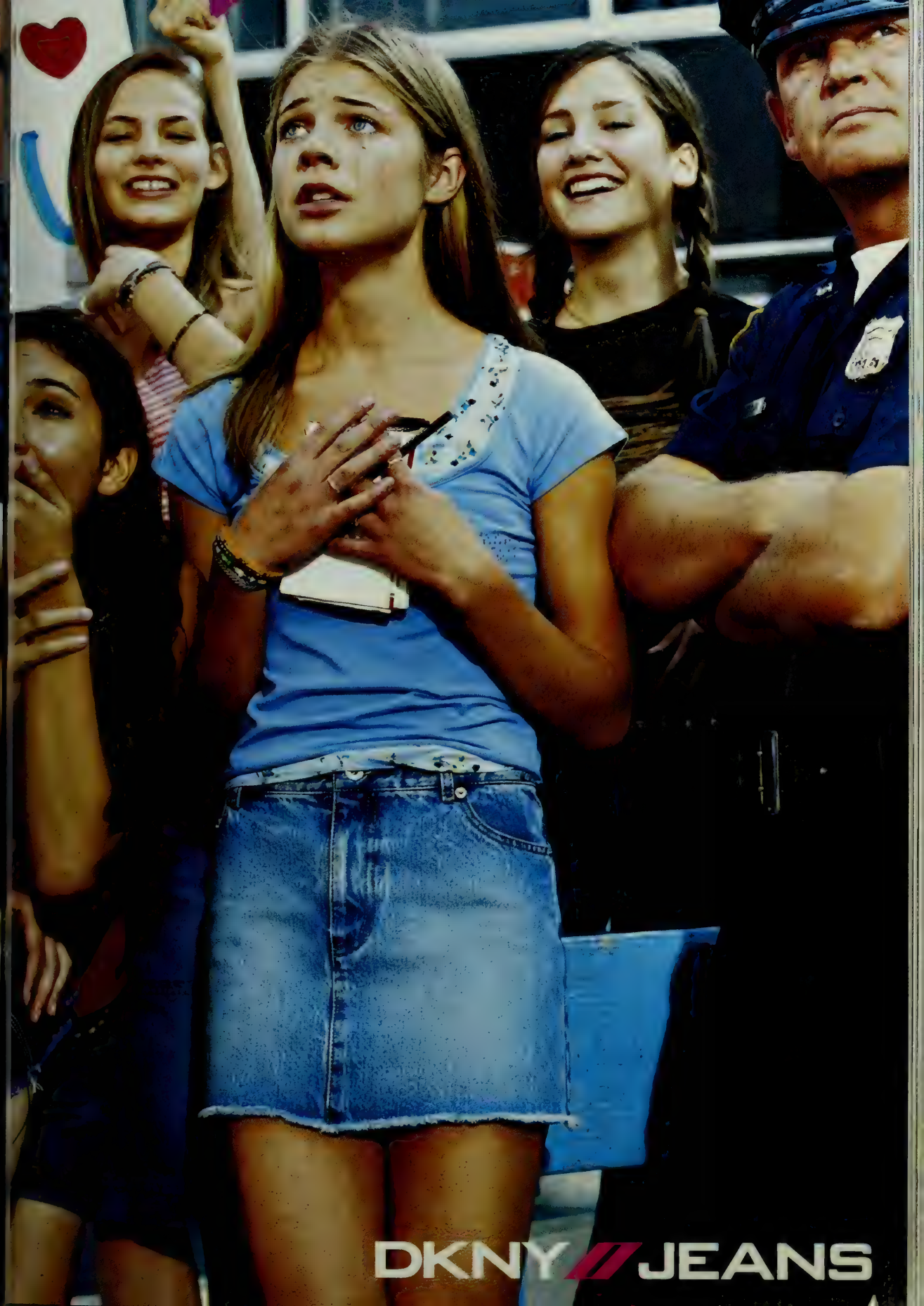

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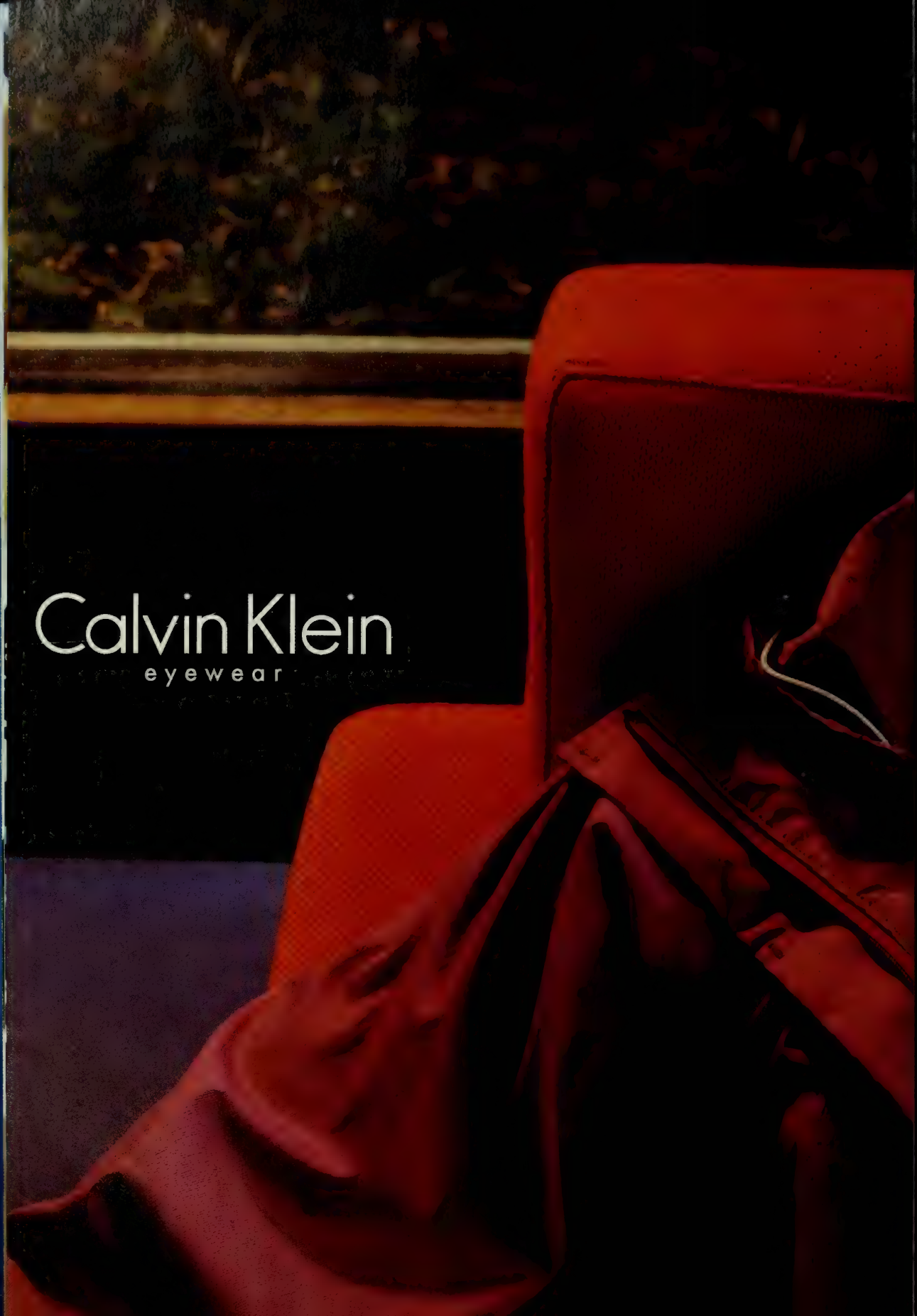

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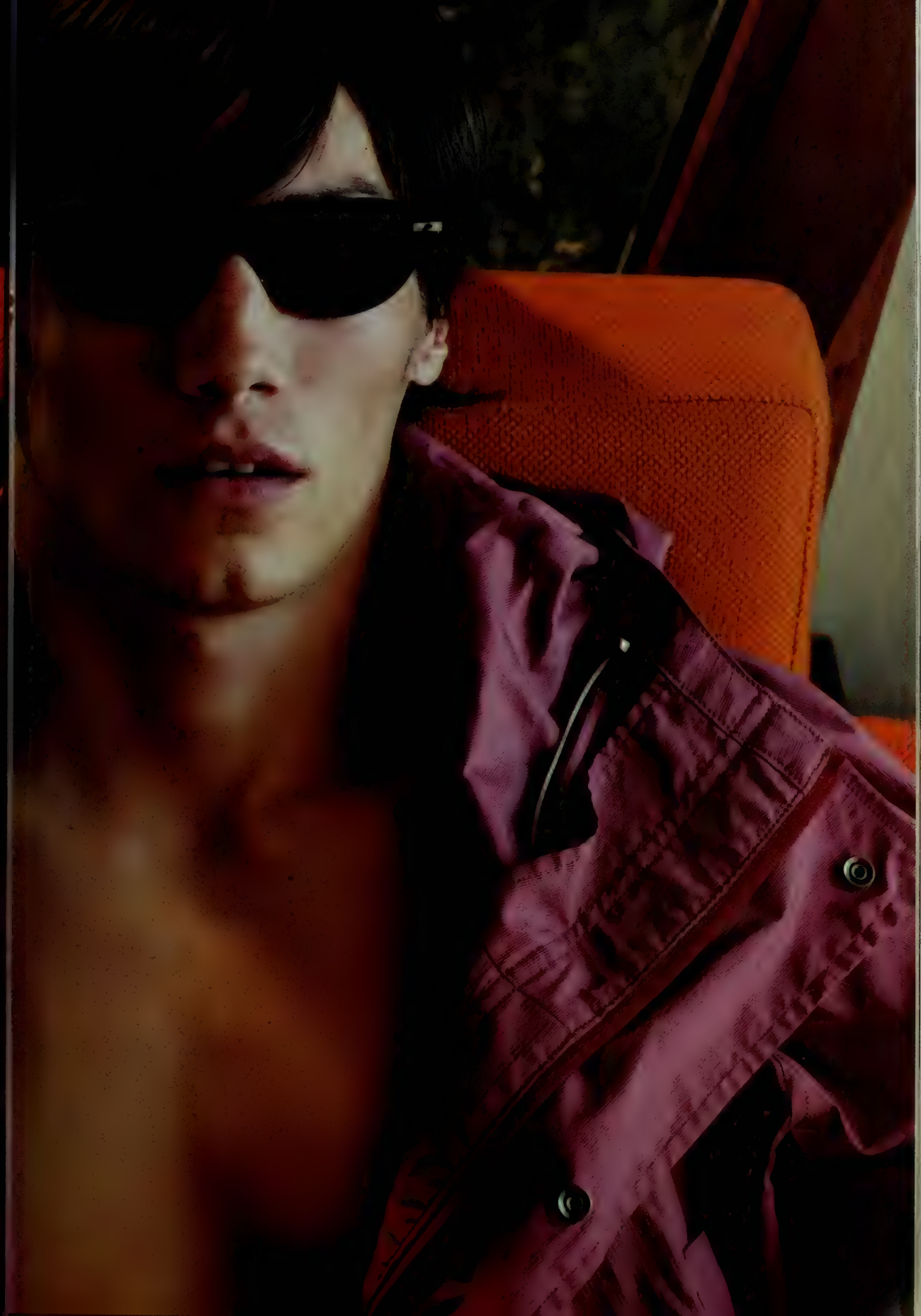

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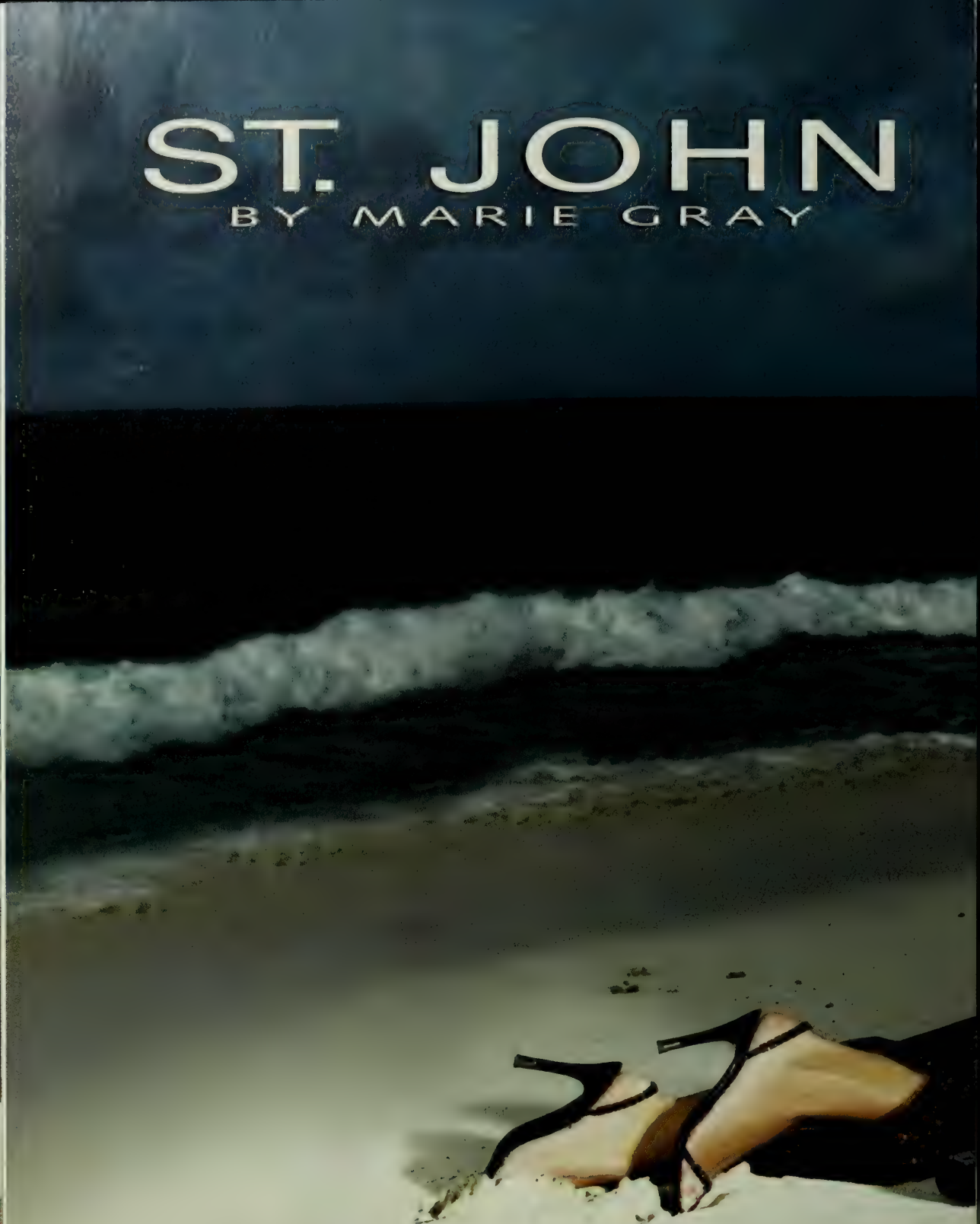



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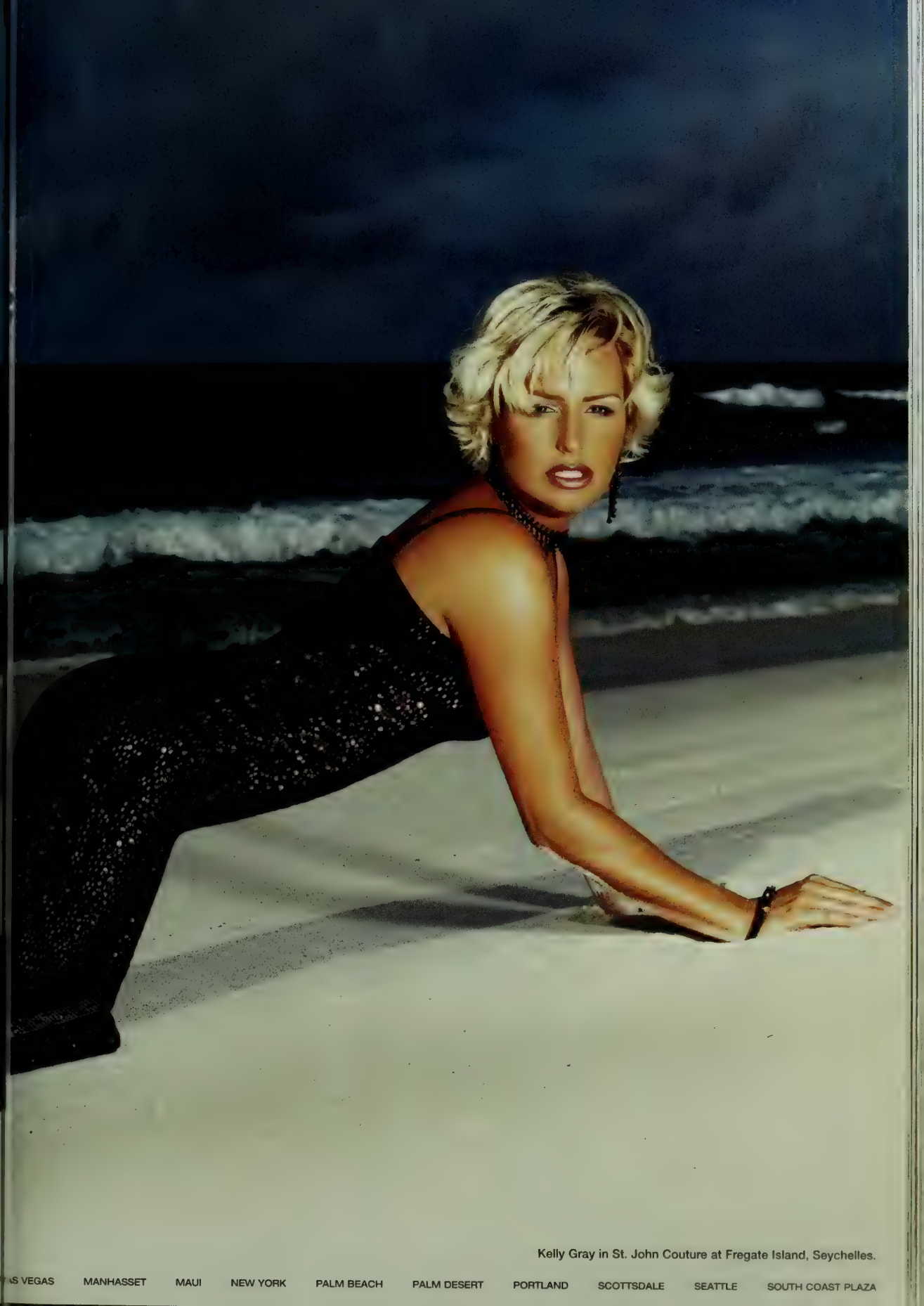

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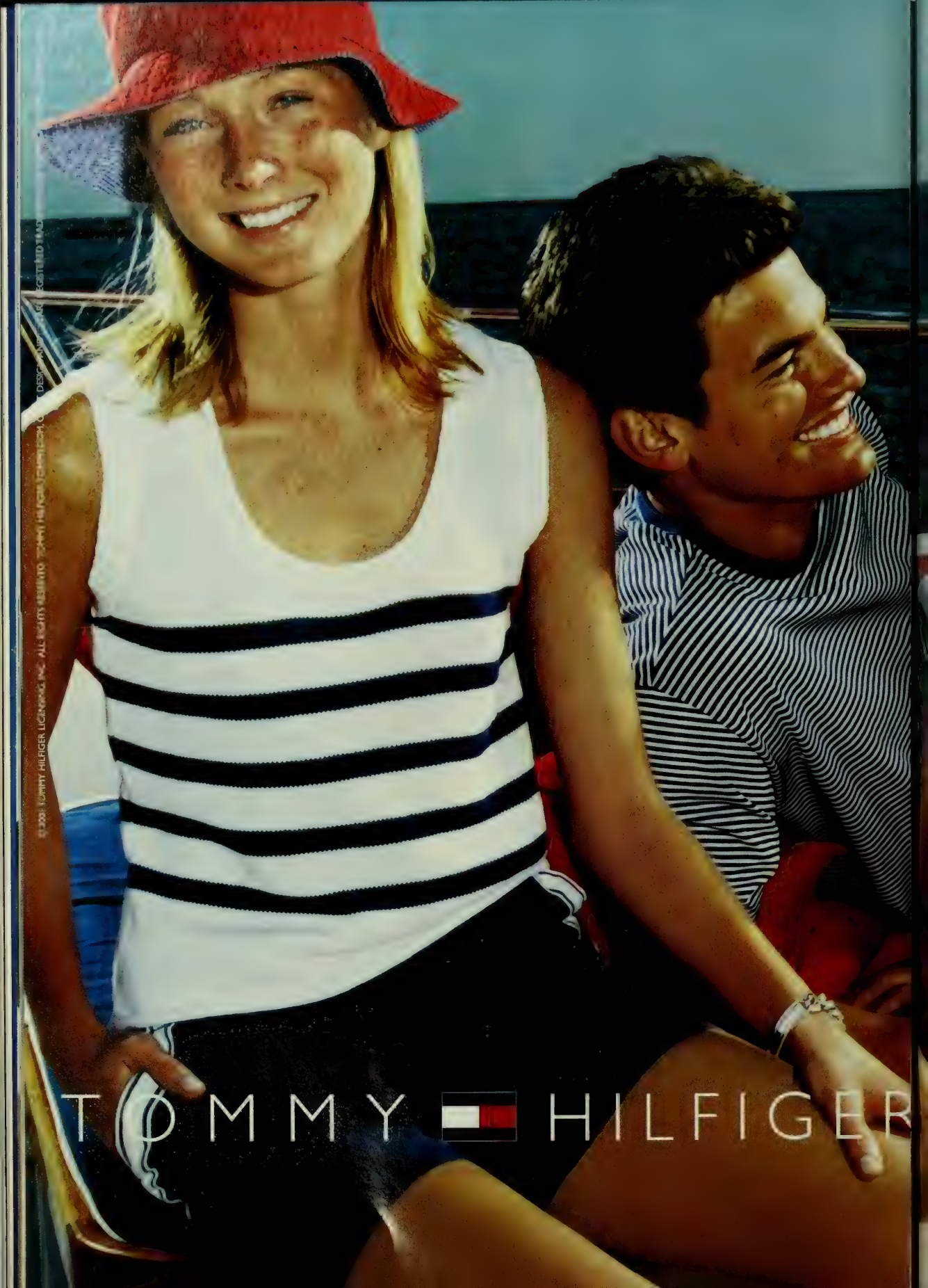
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Kelly Gray in St. John Couture at Fregate Island, Seychelles.


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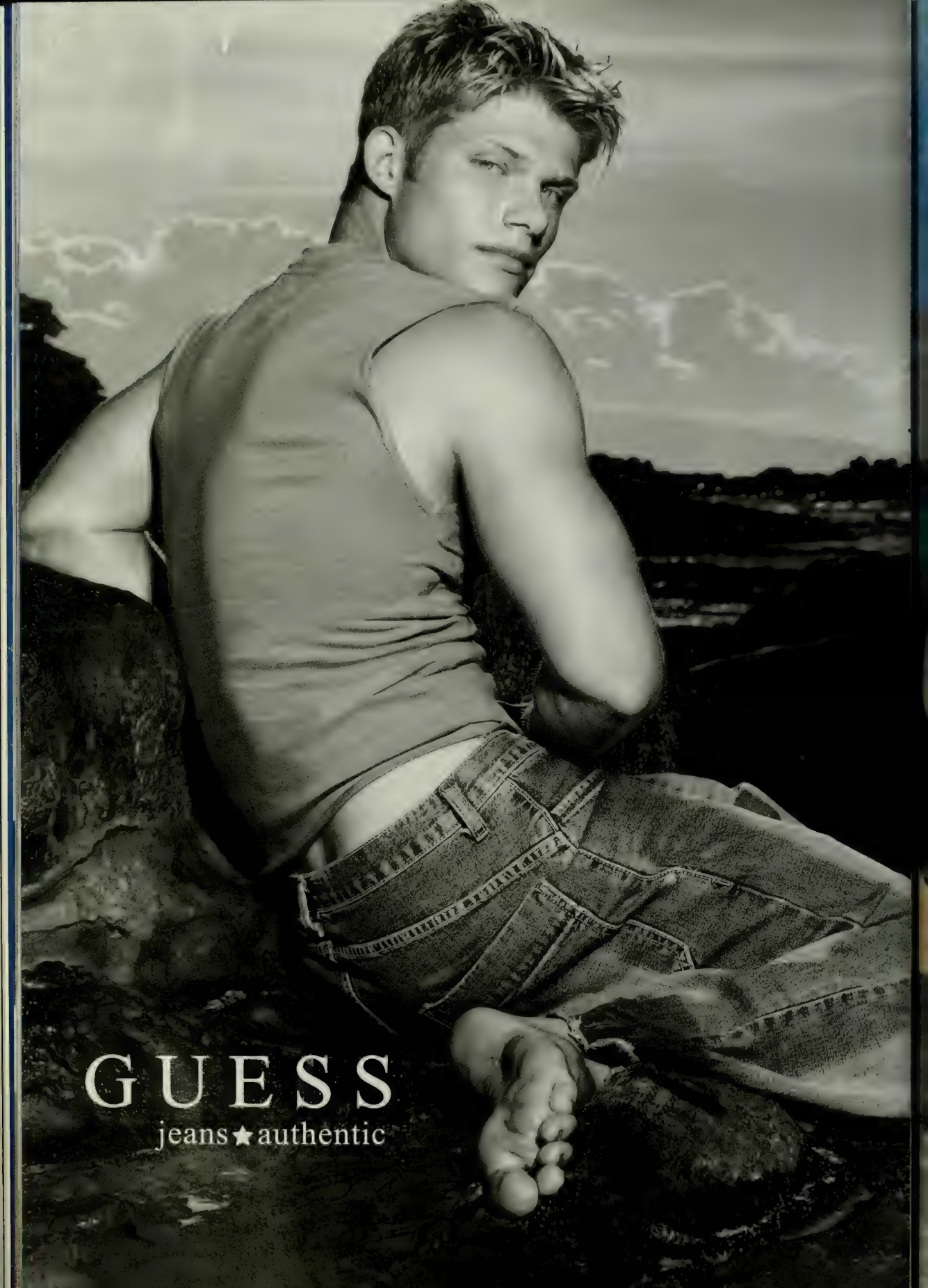

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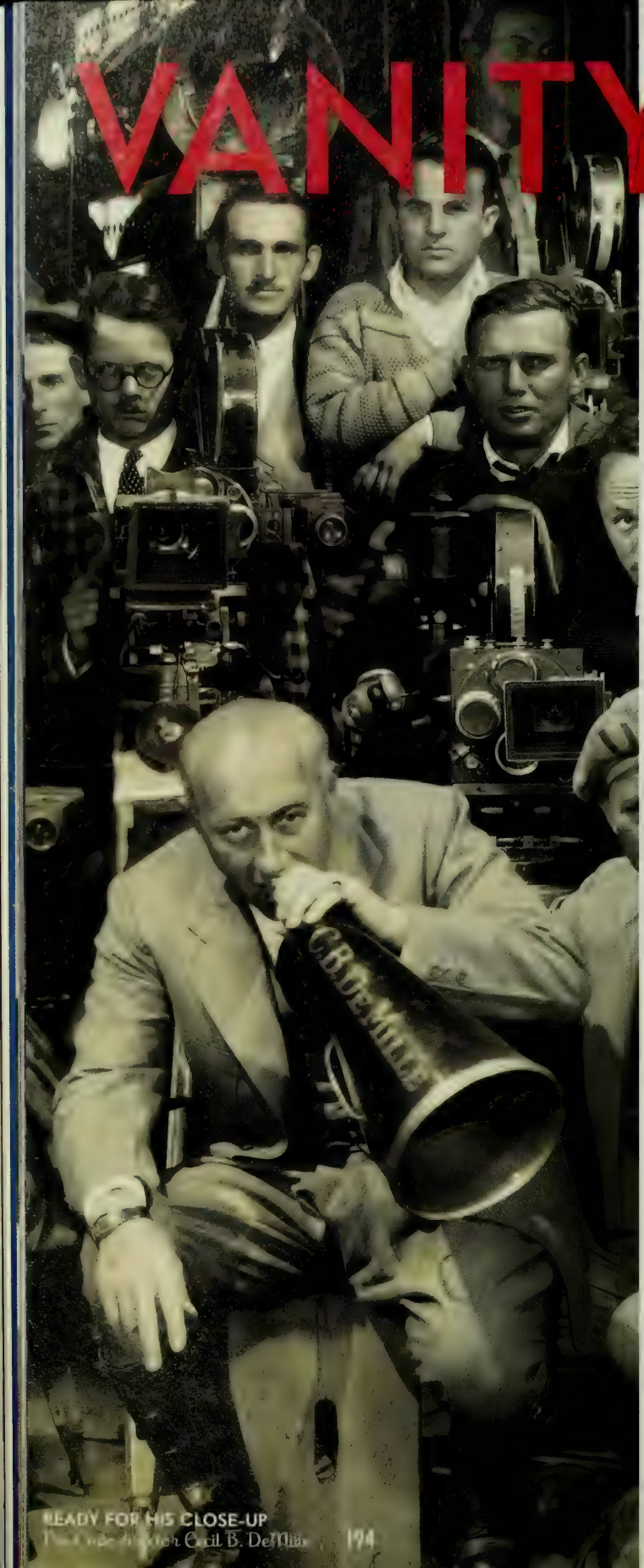
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VANITY FAIR

April 2001 No. 4

Features

HOLLYWOOD 2001 Up-and-comers and comebacks, lifetimes of achievement and 12-year-old veterans, actors turned directors and directors turned legends—there are as many ways to shine as there are stars in *Vanity Fair*'s annual portfolio, a 52-page blockbuster featuring Benicio Del Toro, Joaquin Phoenix, Laura Linney, Ellen Burstyn, Robert Downey Jr., Haley Joel Osment, Ang Lee, Ed Harris, Liv Ullmann, and the reunited cast of 1971's *Carnal Knowledge,* to name just a few. Portraits by Annie Leibovitz, Helmut Newton, Herb Ritts, David LaChapelle, and other top photographers 34

MICHAEL OVITZ, TAKE TWO After that insanely lucrative flameout at Disney and a season in exile, Michael Ovitz is back, providing fresh ammunition to a legion of enemies and skeptics. His Artists Management Group can count Leonardo DiCaprio, Cameron Diaz, and Tom Clancy among its superstar clients and brag of its five prime-time television shows and 37 films in development, but listening to Ovitz's whispered plans for AMG's future, Ned Zeman wonders whether the onetime king of Hollywood will be remembered as a 21st-century Lew Wasserman or a latter-day Lear. Portraits by Helmut Newton 40

THE KILLING GAME John Huba and Bruce Handy spotlight John McTiernan's remake of the 1975 ultra-violent, man-against-the-corporate-machine thriller, *Rollerball,* a Generation X.F.L. movie set in an all-too-recognizable future and starring Jean Reno, Chris Klein, LL Cool J, and Rebecca Romijn-Stamos 41

SWINGING INTO DISASTER Gore Vidal's *Myra Breckinridge* was the scandalous best-seller of 1968, but could its raunchy, gender-bending spirit be captured on film? Fresh from Swinging London, seduced by Twentieth Century Fox executives Richard Zanuck and David Brown, neophyte director Michael Sarne thought so—until he grappled with a cast that included Raquel Welch, Mae West, John Huston, and Rex Reed. Steven Daly chronicles the making of a legendary bomb that killed the career of the 29-year-old Sarne and brought down a studio regime 41

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30 DAYS IN THE LIFE OF THE CULTURE Fashion forward—honoring renowned *Vogue* photographer John Rawlings. Hot Reels: Bob Colacello reviews the documentary *Pie in the Sky: The Brigid Berlin Story,* and Bruce Handy critiques Iranian *auteur* Jafar Panahi's *The Circle.* Elissa Schappell's Hot Type. A. M. Homes checks in with lawyer-cum-art-collector Alan Hergott and German miniature artist Oliver Boberg. Tour de force—L.A.'s Cocktail Nation by bus; Postcard from Los Angeles. James Wolcott uncovers the new, hit crime drama *CSI* 17

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READY FOR HIS CLOSE-UP
The Cape Fear director Cecil B. DeMille 194


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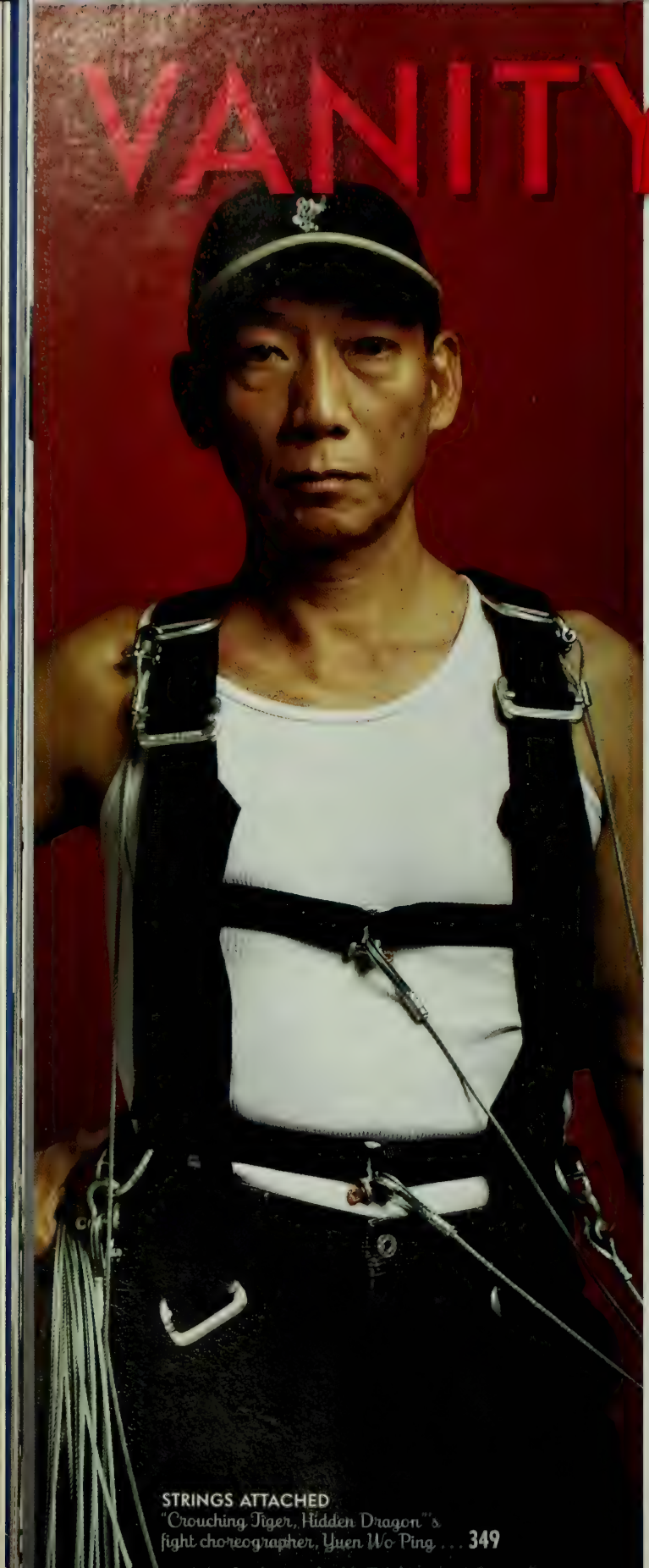




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VANITY FAIR

April 2001 No. 48

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 32

Columns

ORIGINAL SIN Between the 1930 arrival of talkies and the censorship rules that the Catholic Church forced on the film industry in 1934, movies were grittily sophisticated, leading ladies (Barbara Stanwyck, Loretta Young, Bette Davis) were deliciously amoral, and no tale of human depravity was taboo. Examining the oeuvre of pre-Code Hollywood, James Wolcott resurrects a brief moment that produced some surprisingly modern masterpieces 19

WHO STOLE THE OSCARS? Last year, when Willie Fulgear stumbled across 52 stolen Oscars, he was presented with a $50,000 reward and introduced to the Academy Awards audience by Billy Crystal. Since then the plot has thickened. Having interviewed the truckdriver who confessed to the theft and Fulgear himself, Mark Seal explores whether it was luck or larceny that led the junkman to a Dumpster full of golden statuettes. Portraits by Art Streiber 20

THE DEVIL IN MISS DAVIS Shunned by much of Hollywood society, Bette Davis was a lonely star, plagued by insecurity. Recalling his seven-year friendship with Davis, producer William Frye describes the laughter-filled evenings and the violent outbursts, the diva's stormy marriage to Gary Merrill and her passionate rivalry with Joan Crawford—all keys to a woman capable of great kindness and even greater grudges 22

THIS IS CINERAMA Cinerama's 1952 debut hit the front page of *The New York Times,* but only seven films would be made using the revolutionary, three-projector wide-screen movie process, and by the mid-60s it had been supplanted by cheaper, less cumbersome panoramic filming technologies. Bruce Handy checks in with a band of obsessives who have sacrificed their homes and fortunes to preserve Cinerama, and whose ultimate savior may be Microsoft billionaire Paul Allen 25

MURDER MOST UNFORGETTABLE Overnight, with the Manson family's grisly 1969 murders of actress Sharon Tate, hairdresser-to-the-stars Jay Sebring, and three others, Hollywood turned from its druggy innocence to become a fortress of panic, paranoia, and rumor. After years of resisting the idea, Dominick Dunne recalls his friendship with Tate and Sebring, as well as the inner circle's reaction to the slaughter 2

THE MAN HOLLYWOOD TRUSTED For 50 years, Richard Gully, an English aristocrat who became Jack Warner's longtime aide-de-camp, heard it all—the love affairs, the corruption, and the cover-ups. Before his death last fall at age 93, Gully broke his discreet silence, telling Amy Fine Collins the secrets of Golden Age Hollywood, from the truth about Gary Cooper, Grace Kelly, and Spencer Tracy to the entertainment-world liaisons of such powers as J.F.K., Bugsy Siegel, and Aly Khan 2

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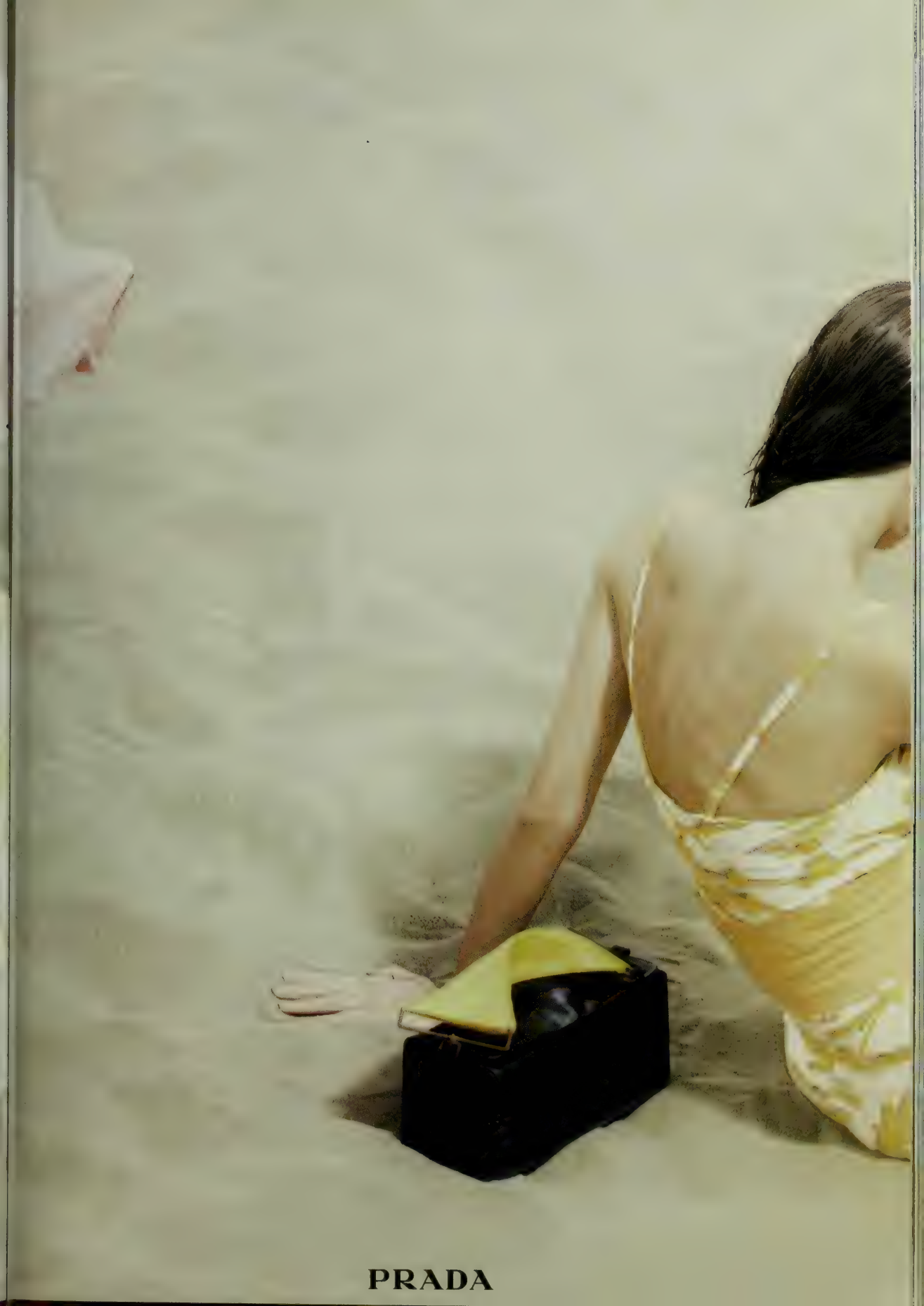
STRINGS ATTACHED
"Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon"'s fight choreographer, Yuen Wo Ping . . . 349


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TOP GUNS The Jesse James story has been filmed dozens of times, with the fabled outlaw incarnated by such disparate actors as his own son, Roy Rogers, and Rob Lowe. John Huba and Bruce Handy spotlight the latest version, *American Outlaws,* in which the lead goes to Irish newcomer Colin Farrell. 3

HURRICANE CHARLIE The brief, tempestuous life of Charlie Bluhdorn, who built Gulf & Western into a billion-dollar empire, had many unbelievable chapters, including the all-night bull session with Castro and the Mafia run-ins, but none was as colorful as the hot-tempered tycoon's resurrection of Paramount Pictures. Robert Sam Anson recounts how Bluhdorn—in cursing collaboration with Robert Evans and Barry Diller—turned a failing studio into the engine for an unparalleled string of hits including *Love Story, The Godfather,* and *Raiders of the Lost Ark* 3

Vanities

GOING TO TOWNE *Mr. Show*'s creators rise again; Divided Attentions: the national hype index. Nan Darien takes meetings in Lotusland. Q&A: George Wayne plays Maude to Bud Cort's Harold. *Blow* director Ted Demme's speed dial. Ed Coaster angles for an Oscars-party invite. Intelligence Report: the new star system. Henry Alford on Rex Reed's little black book of Hollywood actresses; Out & In: the return of Est, Beauty Bar. 3

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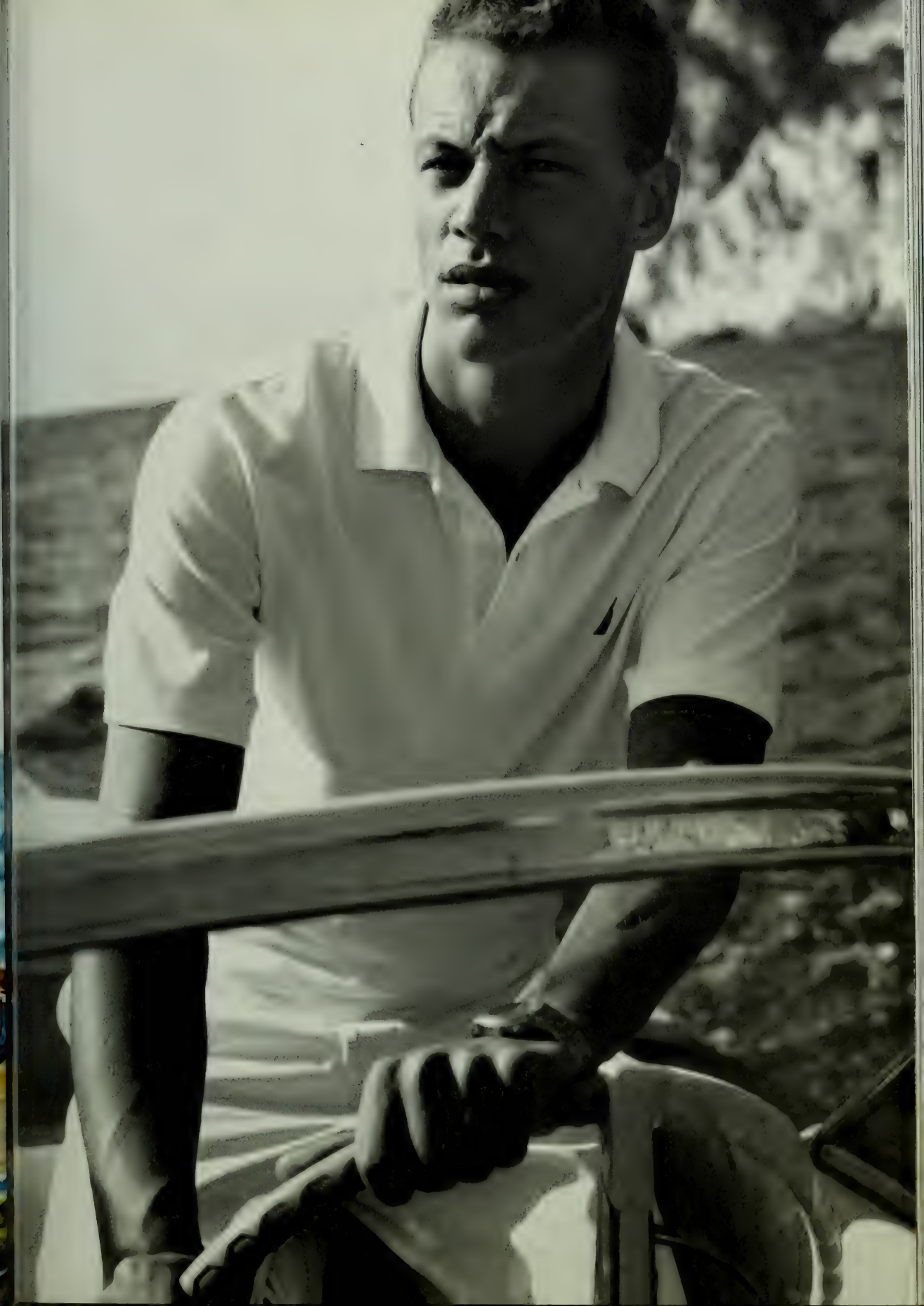



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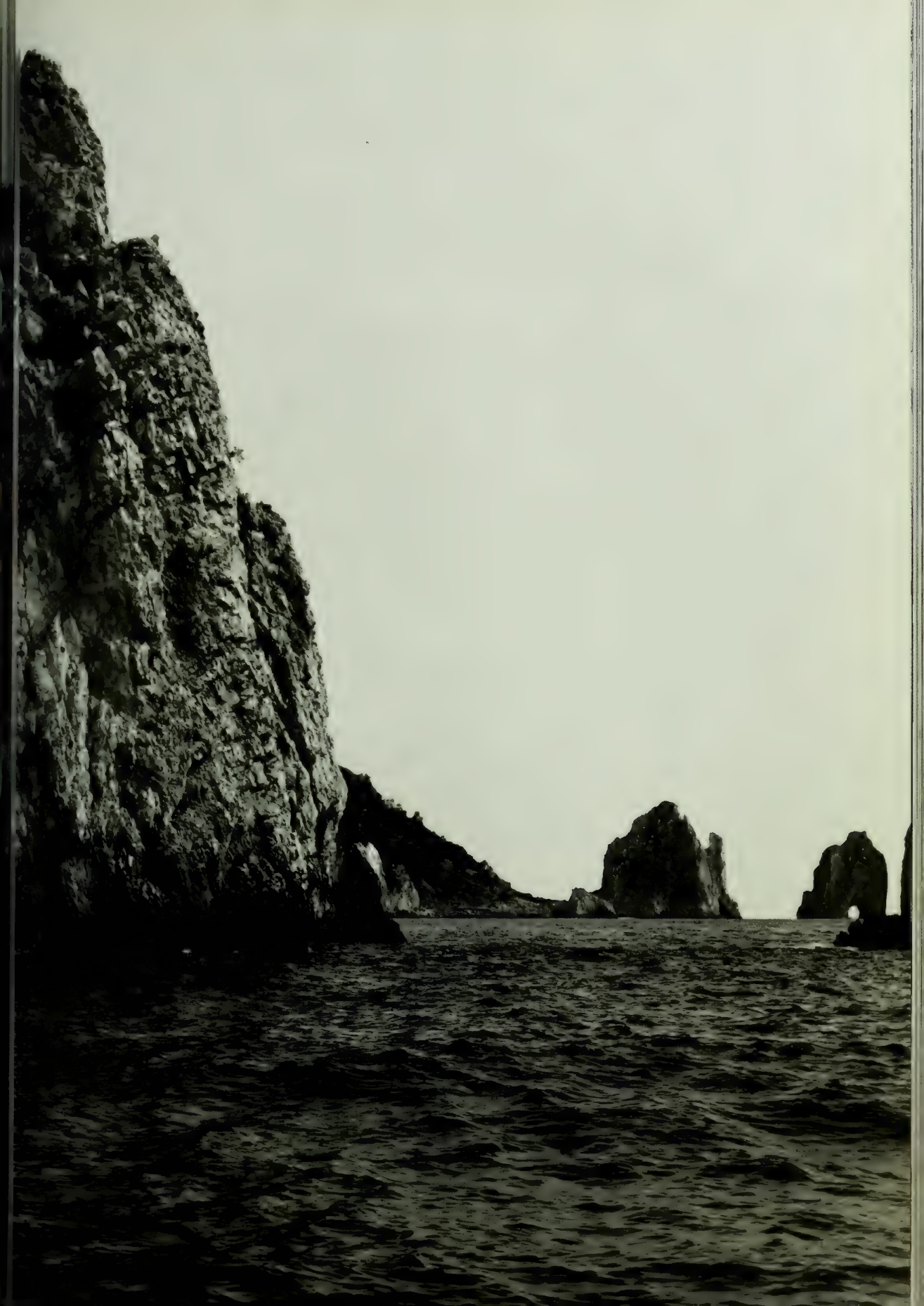
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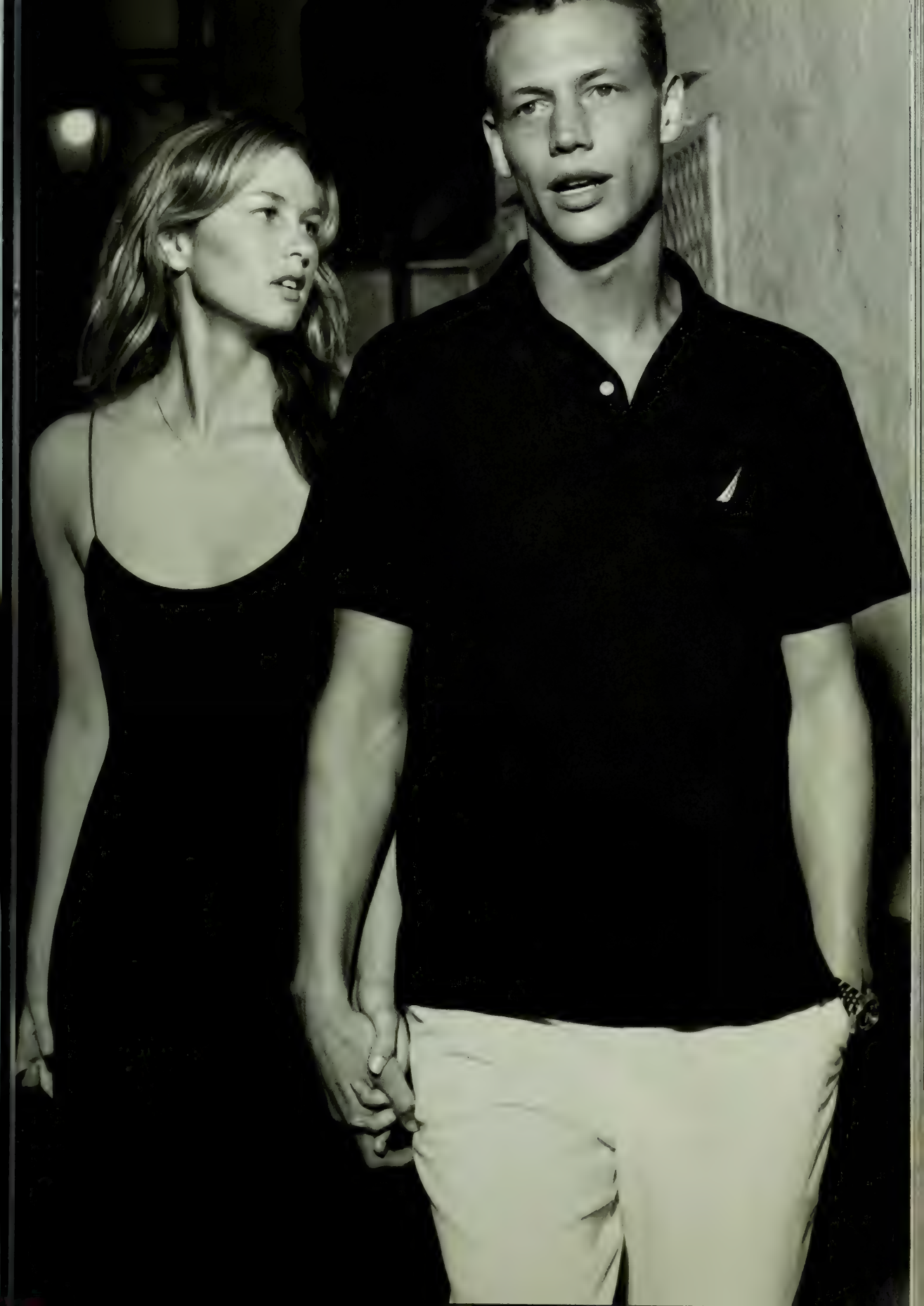




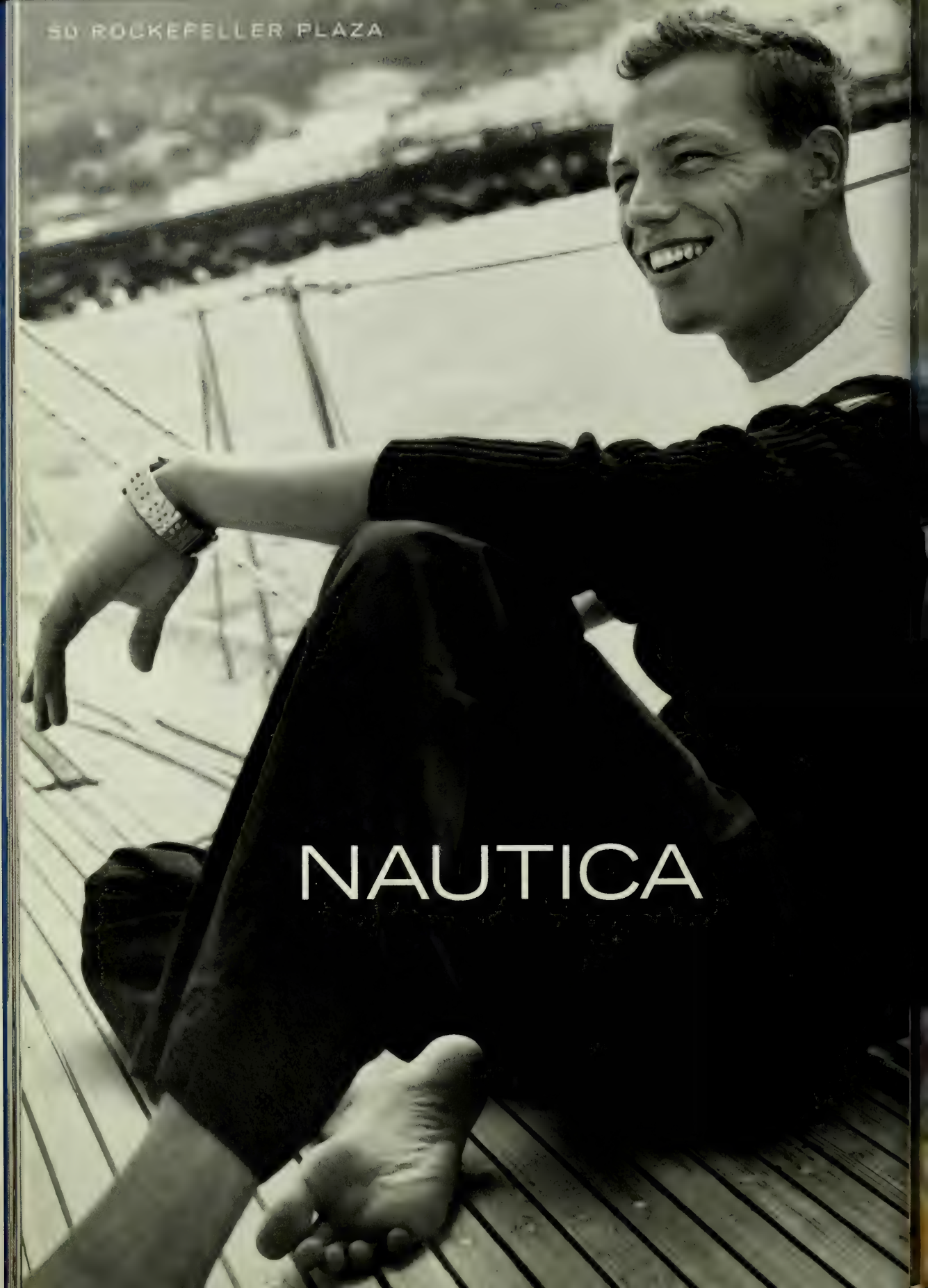





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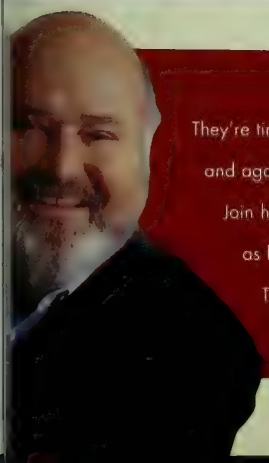
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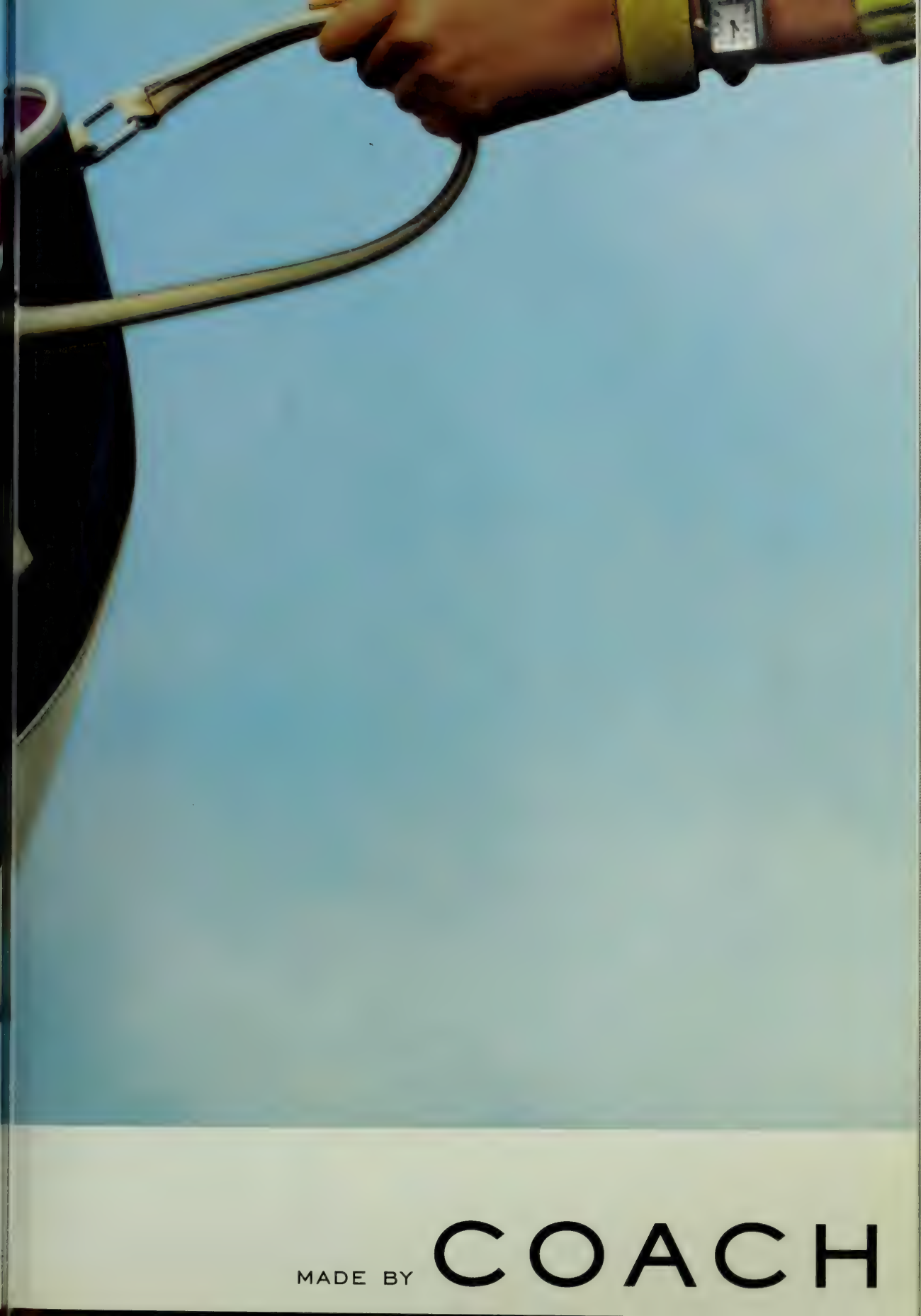
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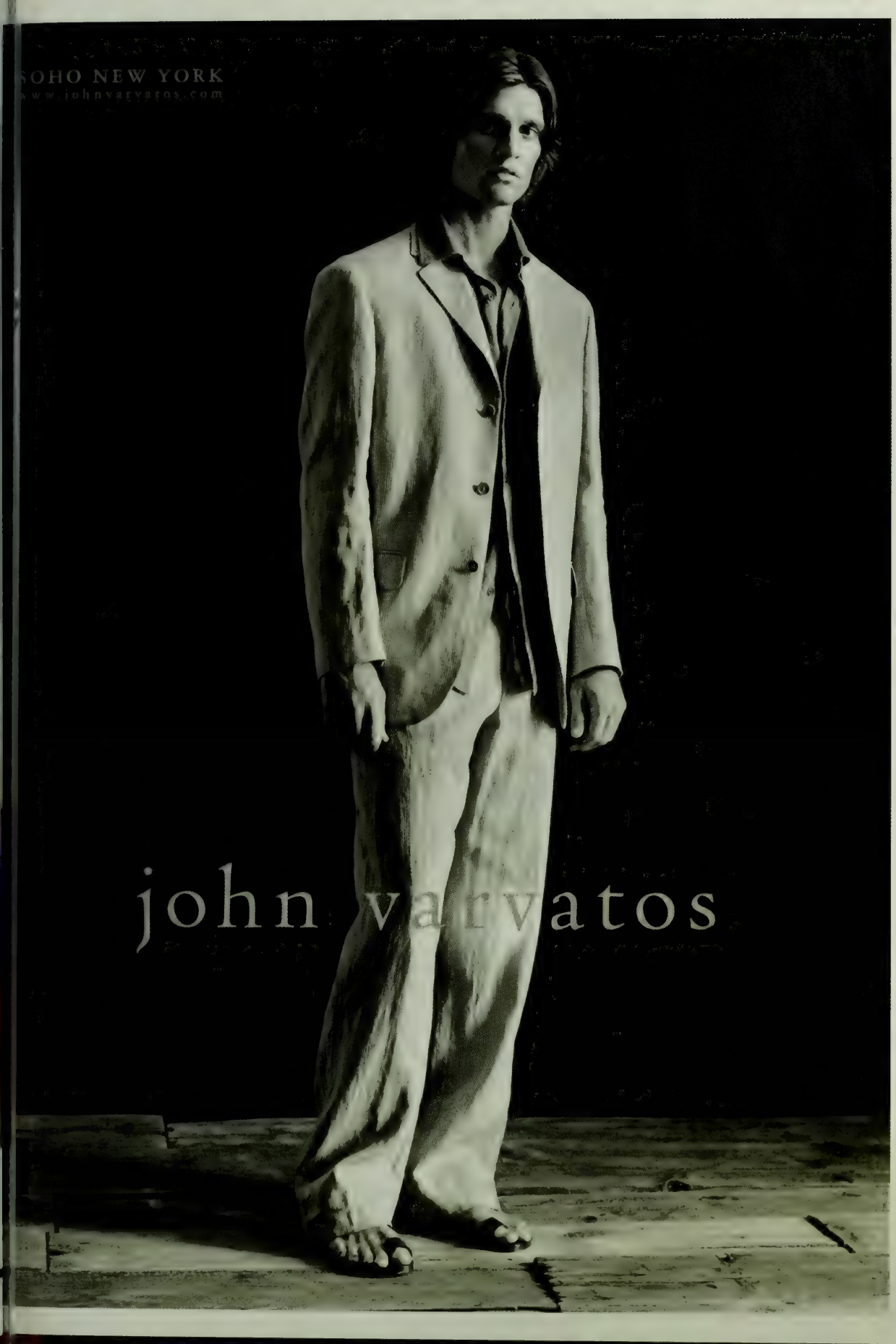
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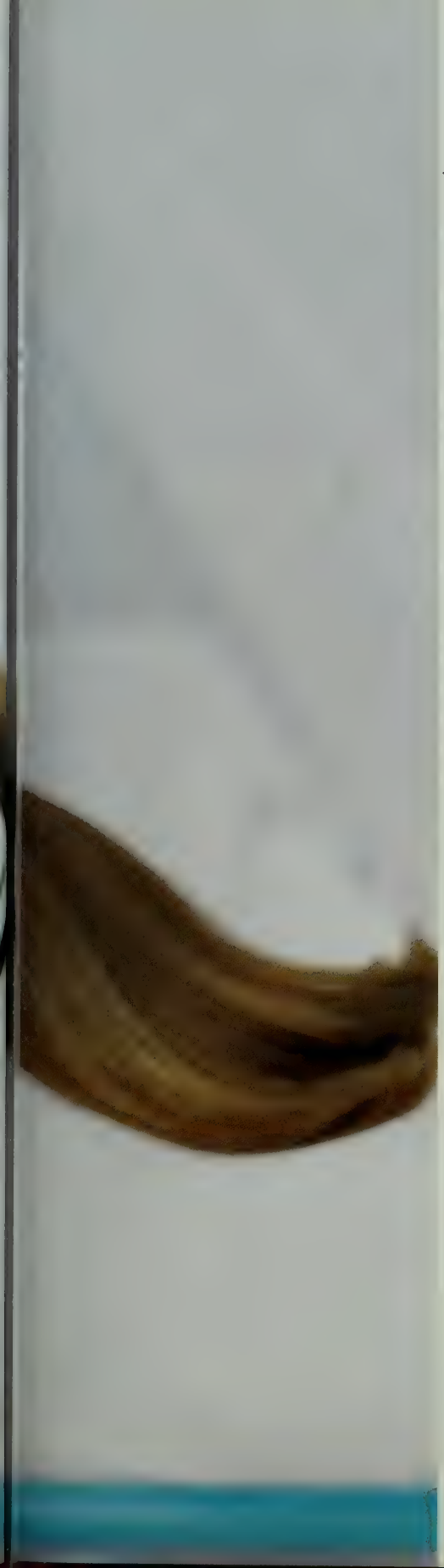

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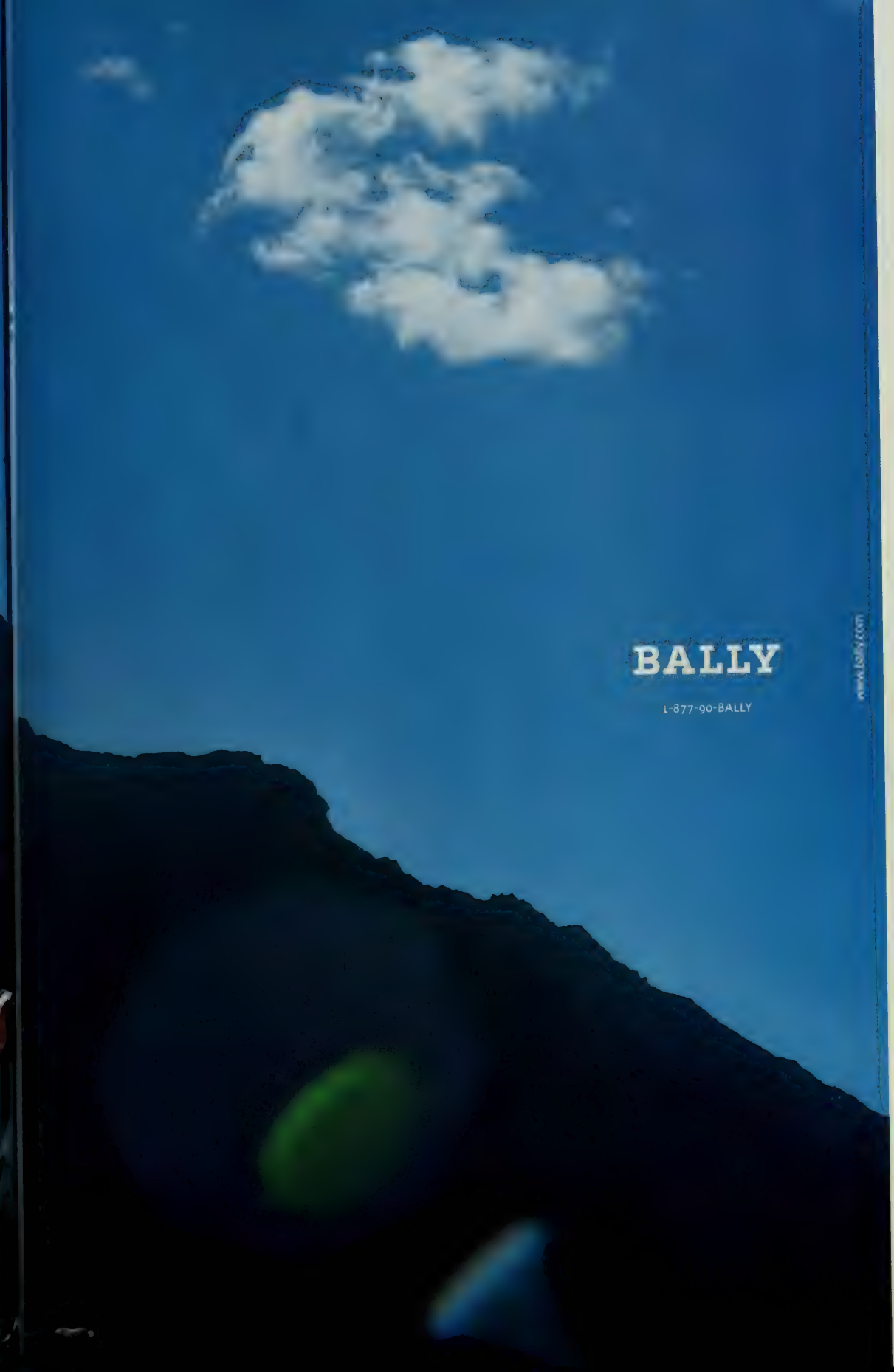
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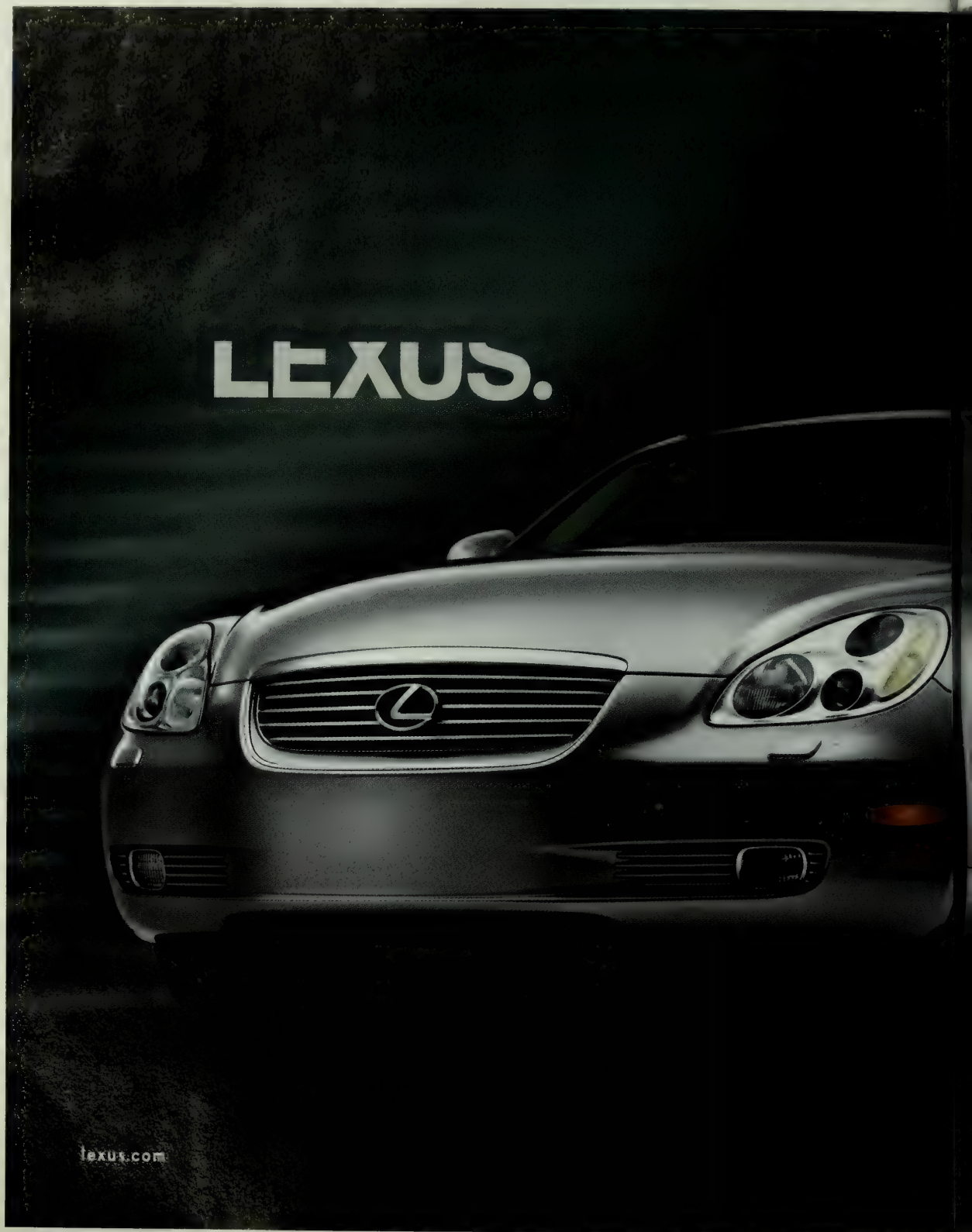
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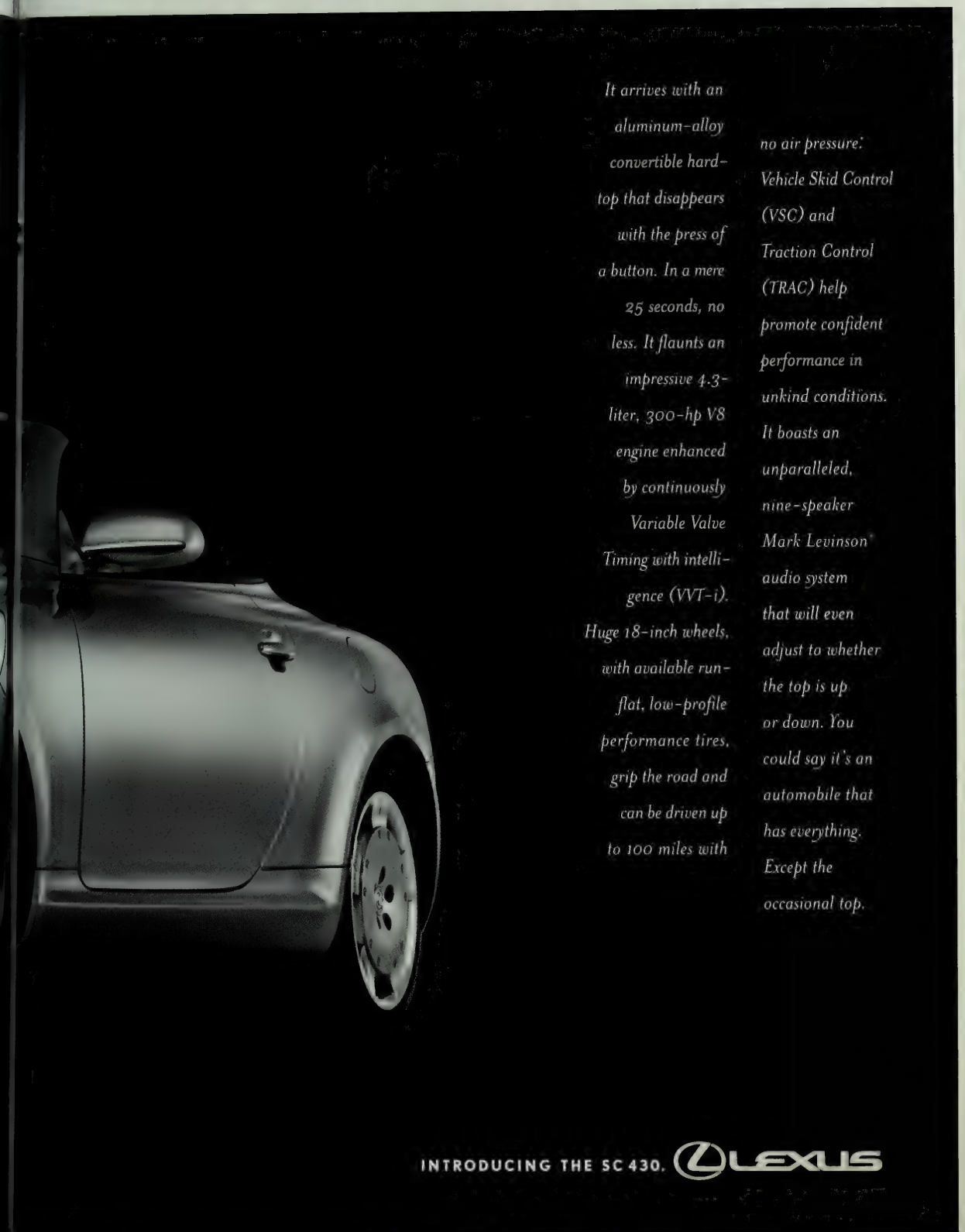
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Clockwise from top left: 2001 Cadillac DeVille DTS; David Tillman, MD, Alain Guiboux, Karen Guiboux of GM, Michael Douglas, and Catherine Zeta-Jones; Tropher Grace of *That '70s Show*, *Traffic* screenwriter Stephen Gaghan, and *Traffic* co-star Benicio Del Toro.

Traffic Premiere Sponsored by Cadillac

Cadillac served as a sponsor of the L.A. premiere of *Traffic*, a gritty, fast-paced film by Golden Globe-nominated director Steven Soderberg. The event, held in December at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, benefited the Motion Picture & Television Fund. The premiere was followed by a VIP reception attended by the stars of the film, including Michael Douglas and Catherine Zeta-Jones, Benico Del Toro (winner of the "Best Supporting Actor" Golden Globe this year—one of two for *Traffic*), and Don Cheadle.

The Endurance

An authentic survival tale played out recently in Condé Nast's new midtown screening room. Guests of *Vanity Fair* witnessed the real-life adventure of 28 men who survived nearly two harrowing years of brutal Antarctic conditions after their wooden sailing ship became trapped in—and eventually crushed by—the surrounding ice. *The Endurance*, a gripping documentary that premiered at the Telluride Film Festival as a work in progress, traces the heroic but ill-fated 1914 expedition of celebrated polar explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton. Guests met director George Butler at a reception preceding the screening.







Clockwise from top: George Butler, director of *The Endurance*; Ross Klein from Polo Jeans and guest with Kimberly Roush from the Telluride Film Festival; Tom Luddy of the Telluride Film Festival.

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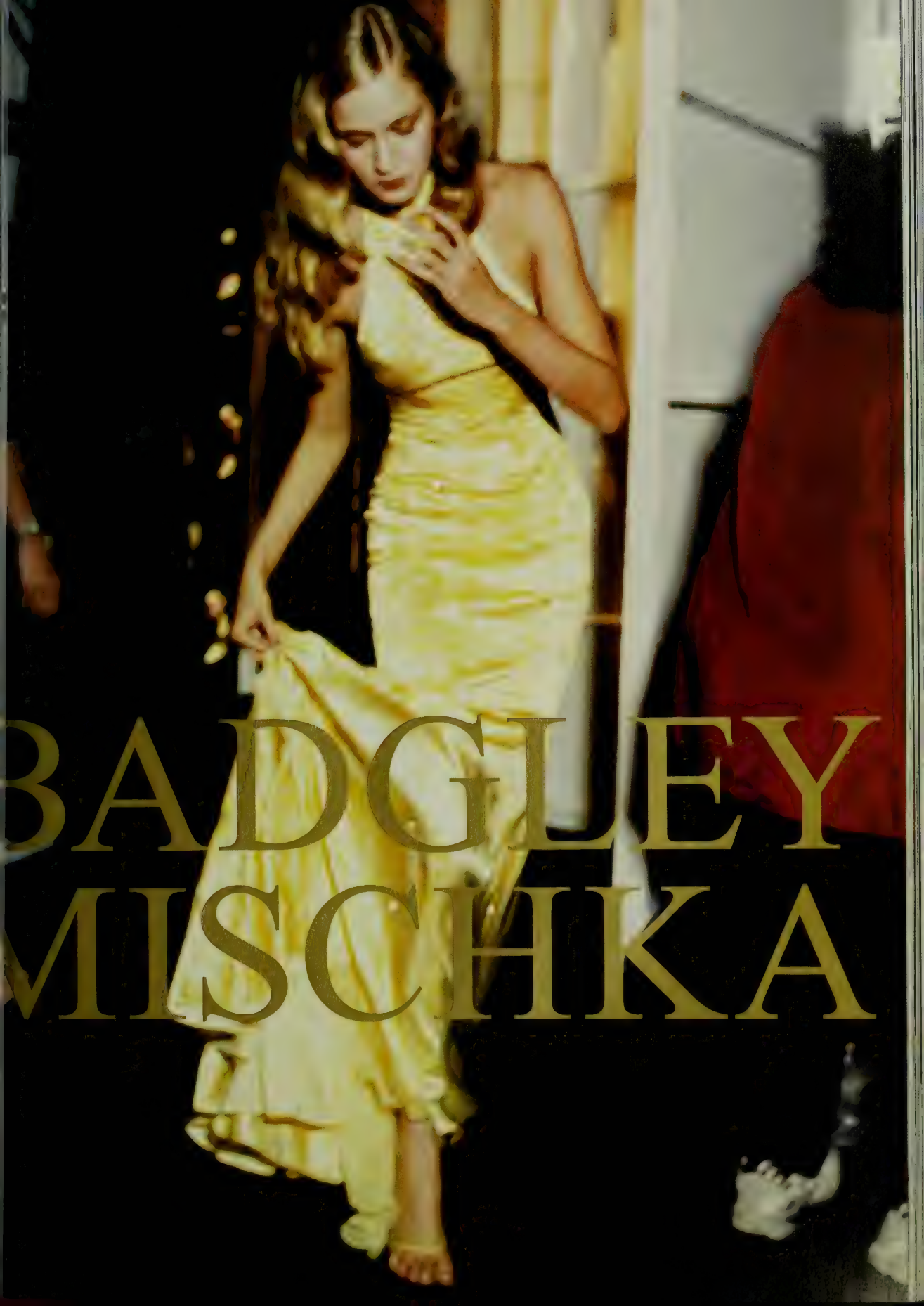
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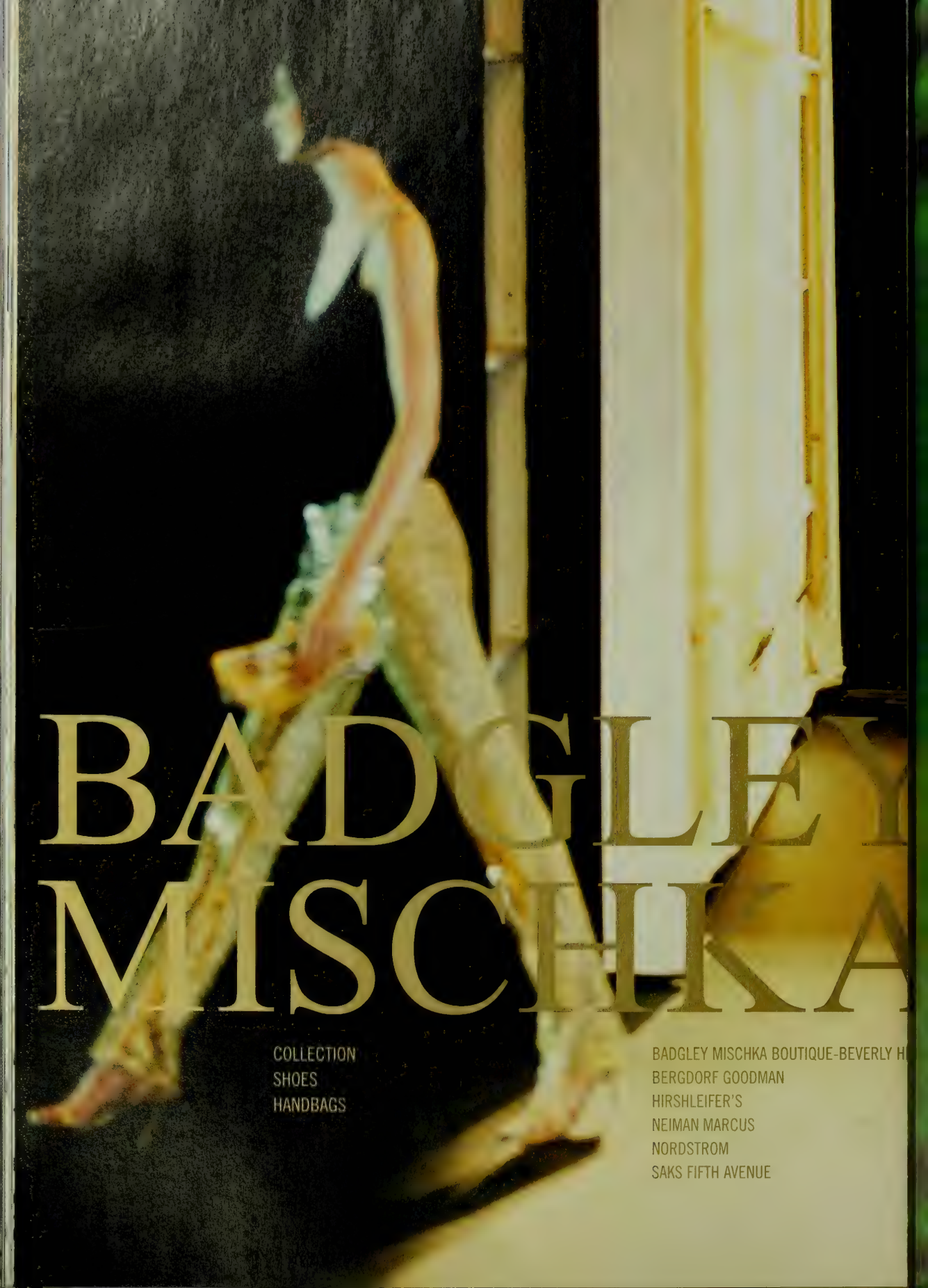
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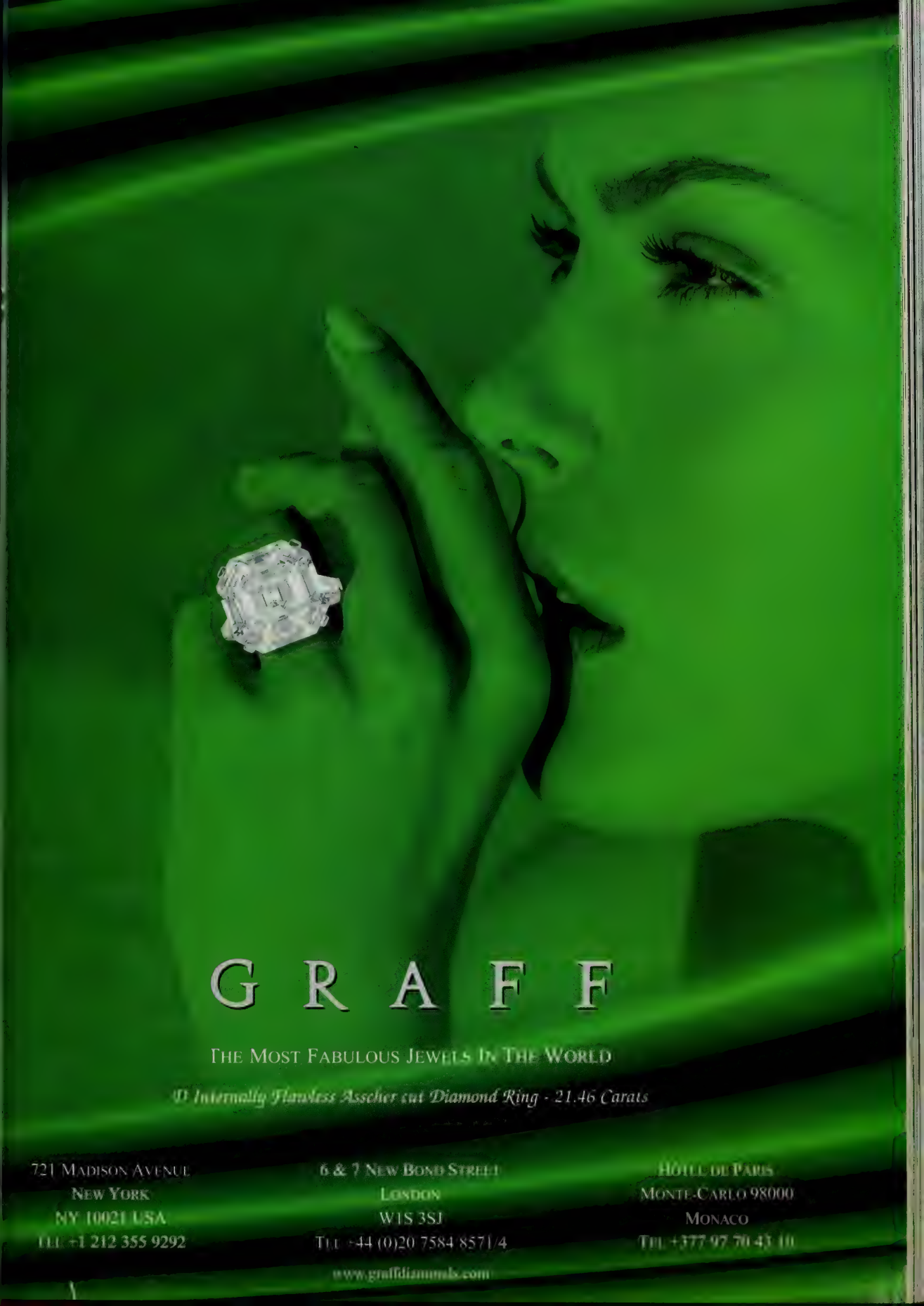
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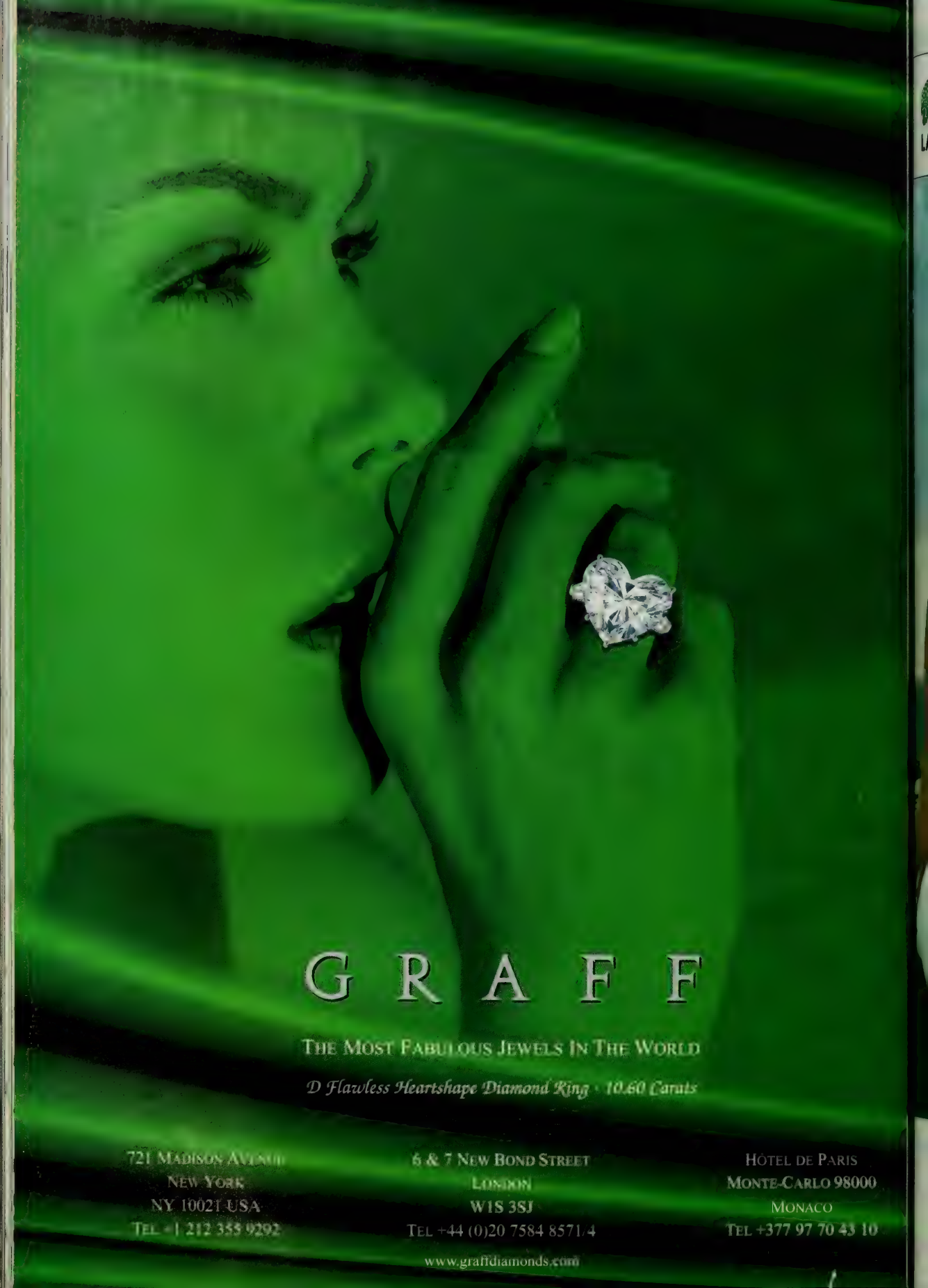

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Cover Story



The first thing you may notice that's different about this year's Hollywood-issue cover is that you can actually identify all the people on it. So it has that going for it. (It's not that we've forgotten about Hollywood's Bright Young Things; it's just that after six years of triple-foldout Hollywood covers dappled with a dozen or so fresh-faced newcomers, we decided it was time to break the mold.) This year's entry—to my mind one of the most glorious magazine covers ever—is a multigenerational gallery of great actresses who also happen to be great beauties. But you try corralling Nicole Kidman, Catherine Deneuve, Meryl Streep, Gwyneth Paltrow, Cate Blanchett, Kate Winslet, Vanessa Redgrave, Chloë Sevigny, Sophia Loren, and Penélope Cruz into one room. It seemed almost impossible at first. And through the four-month ordeal of putting the cover together there were moments when we thought the idea was totally inspired, others when we thought we must be out of our minds to have even attempted such a folly.

Once we settled on the concept, Annie Leibovitz, who has shot all our Hollywood-issue covers, decided she needed a great red room. Don't ask why a great red room. Like all of Leibovitz's ideas, this one just came to her. And so I went along with it. We considered designer Carolina Herrera's elegant Victorian living room in her Upper East Side brownstone. There were just two obstacles: how to get all the actresses there, and all there on the same day. Features editor Jane Sarkin, West Coast editor Krista Smith, senior style production editor Kathryn MacLeod, and editorial associate Siobhan McDevitt spent the next 100 days working the headsets like air-traffic controllers in the middle of a twister—juggling the actresses' shooting schedules, changing plane itineraries, tracking some ever changing body sizes, and noting special dietary needs. Unfortunately, the only day that worked for all of them was sometime in the year 2115. No matter it turned out, Herrera's living room co be "replicated." We sent it packing, al with a real mantelpiece and a Sarg (also real), from New York to Londo Los Angeles, and ended up doing cover in three separate shoots.

You might think a photograph t looks this fabulous couldn't have h pened without at least one woman los an eye. And, yes, the event did have quasi diva-esque moments: Cate Blanchett insisted on posing nex Vanessa Redgrave. Sophia Loren wanted a room at Claridge's and, for shoot, "*big . . . yellow . . . diamonds.*" Gwyneth Paltrow had to be p away from a pair of Manolo Blahnik boots she'd spotted. And ev one wanted Kevyn Aucoin to do her makeup, prompting Leibovit wonder what you're probably wondering, too: "What is it with *Kevy*

But, for the most part, the shoots exemplified the kind of school class that only stars like these still know something about. actresses showed up without their quote-unquote handlers, and t knew exactly what they wanted to wear. They talked craft and coming projects, and swapped secrets of the trade. "When a direc wants the intense Sophia, I give him this side," the actress announ to a rapt group of admirers. "When they want the soft Sophia," said, turning in profile, "I give them this side."

It's unfortunate that this month we've been called to task by a re er for overusing the word "legendary." Because this time we re mean it—the legend power fueling the production of this cover was most chilling. Among them, the actresses have made 399 movies received 27 Oscar awards and nominations. Polly Mellen, herse legend in the fashion business, styled the shoot. A veteran of *Vogue* *Allure,* she has been making women look great for more than 30 ye As for Leibovitz, she has photographed just about everybody ther to be photographed. I stopped by the first shoot, at Leibovitz's studi Chelsea. Hours of preparation that day ensured a mood of collegia and calm prior to the actual sitting. Finally, after they had been clothed, and made up, the actresses took their places. There w some final adjustments, then dead silence save for the music boom from a Bose stereo. And as a crowd of about 50 assorted assista crew members, and random *V.F.* staffers watched, Leibovitz stood hind the camera and *click*. She turned to me and told me she got cover in the first shot.

—GRAYDON CART





PHOTO FINISHED

Above, Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon co-executive producer and co-writer James Schamus and director Ang Lee with contributing photographer Annie Leibovitz in New York City on January 31, 2001. *Right,* Leibovitz, who shot our cover photograph and 10 of our Hollywood-portfolio subjects, takes advantage of a rare spare moment on the movie set of *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone,* outside London, January 18.


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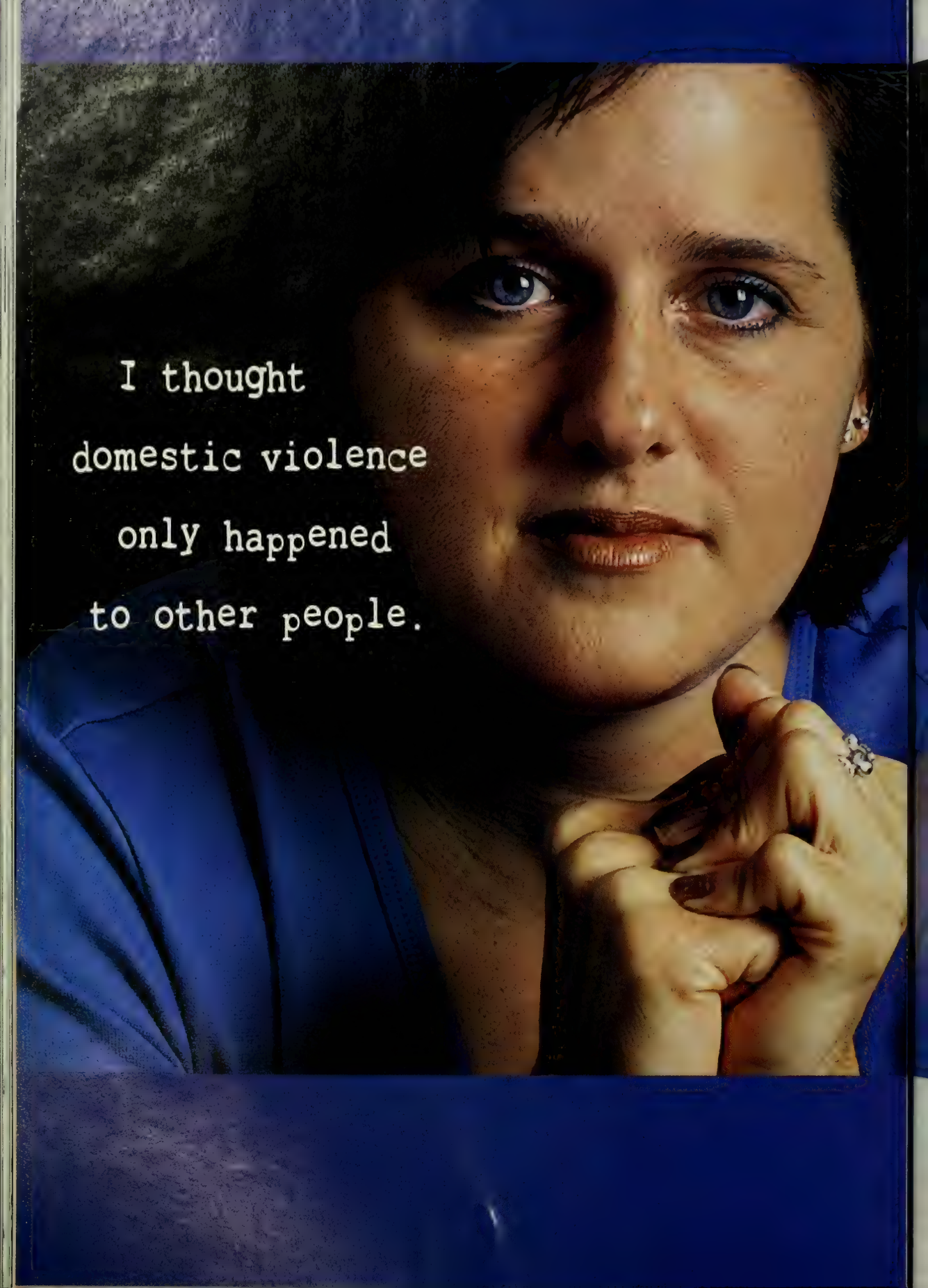


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HERE'S TO US
William Frye and Bette Davis at her home on Heather Drive in Beverly Hills, July 4, 1962.

A television and movie producer for more than 50 years (*The Trouble with Angels, Airport '77*), **William Frye** has worked with and befriended many of Hollywood's leading ladies, including Greta Garbo (the subject of his April 2000 story for *V.F.*), Greer Garson, Joan Fontaine, Olivia de Havilland, and Rosalind Russell. "There were so many and I really liked all of them," he says. As for Bette Davis, the subject of his article this month, "I found her fascinating," says Frye, whose first aspiration after leaving the navy was to become a writer. "Bette could be very cozy but she was always on guard. When I was with her, though, I had good times. I had that close but very short association with her."



HOLLISTER LOWE

Special correspondent **Amy Fine Collins** describes the late Richard Gully, confidant to some of the major players of Hollywood's Golden Age—including Jack Warner, Cyd Charisse, and Angie Dickinson—as a "wide-eyed happy innocent, cast among a glamorous group of corrupt, vain, sinister characters." Visiting Gully in Los Angeles just months before his death at age 93, Collins, whose profile begins on page 284, became the grateful recipient of vintage Hollywood tales of adventure and scandal, as well as of his own episodic life story. Collins says, "Richard was just a completely upstanding, delightful, kind, and curious human being."

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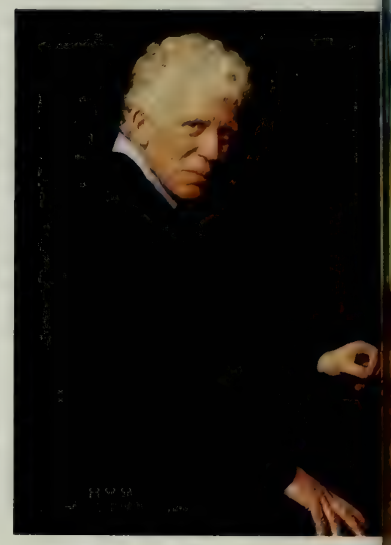
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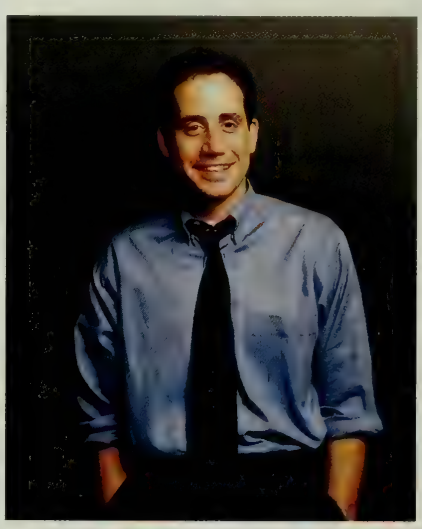
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Founder and C.E.O. of Gulf & Western and savior of Paramount Pictures, Charlie Bluhdorn was thought to be both larger-than-life and crazed. But after conducting 120 interviews for his story on page 308, **Robert Sam Anson** became convinced that Bluhdorn wasn't crazy, "but he sure was larger-than-life. I think he was a great man, and unfortunately there aren't people like that around in Hollywood anymore, nor in American industry," says Anson. Bluhdorn, who built his fortune by assembling a conglomerate of 150 companies, "was not like so many executives today, who are interested in accumulating vast fortunes for themselves," Anson says. "He wanted to build the greatest American company in the world. He was the American Dream boy personified."



GASPER TRINGALE

According to contributing editor **Ned Zeman,** "There is always some trepidation before meeting Michael Ovitz. His legend precedes hi In his long and tumultuous career, Ovitz has indeed carved out a reputation for being an intimidator and a manipulator, something that's wo him plenty of foes. "But when you meet him," says Zeman, "he is a charm and a very easy person to get along with." Ovitz is surely banking on these qualities now that he is in the midst of the greatest gamble of his life, Artists Management Group, which Zeman writes about on page 404. Nevertheless, Zeman says, "Ovitz is still being painted with his past. He may not be th same person he was 10 years ago, but he can't live that part of his life dow

The more contributing editor **Steven Daly** learned about the making of the 1970 "disasterpiece" *Myra Breckinridge,* starring Raquel Welch, Mae West, Rex Reed, and John Huston, the more mind-boggling it all became. "I saw the film again last year and wondered, How did this thing ever get made?" says Daly, whose story on the adaptation of the Gore Vidal novel starts on page 412. "I never imagined that I'd get to answer the question, or that the story behind it would be so strange and convoluted. As if the film's cast wasn't bizarre enough, Brigitte Bardot, Richard Nixon, Andy Warhol, and Charles Manson were all somehow tied in with the picture—which is not even available on video today."



CONTINUED ON PAGE 110


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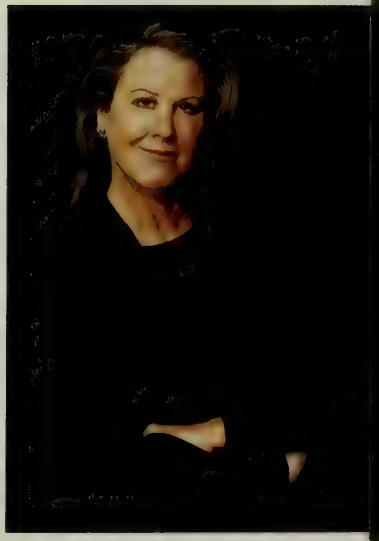


Since its inception seven years ago, features editor **Jane Sarkin** has produced the Hollywood issue's portfolio and gatefold cover. This year's cover, which marks a departure from the traditional Young Hollywood theme, was by far the most challenging. "Once Meryl Streep said yes, everything fell into place," says Sarkin. Then it was about juggling the schedules of the likes of Gwyneth Paltrow, Catherine Deneuve, Cate Blanchett, and Sophia Loren, which ultimately meant three separate shoots (in London, New York, and Los Angeles). Sarkin calls this year's cover "an epic event in magazine-cover production." Still, another task awaits: "Getting these women to our Oscar party."



JIM WRIGHT

Vanity Fair's Hollywood issue wouldn't be the insider's bible readers have come expect without the tireless efforts of West Coast editor **Krista Smith,** who each year attends four film festivals, dozens of cocktail parties, and hundred of movies in her search for the perfect portfolio subjects. "I just think about it constantly, to tell you the truth," confesses Smith, whose directness, sens of humor, and proven nose for what's hot go a long way toward winning over press reps and the stars they live to protect. "To me it's not all about who the biggest stars are," says Smith. "It's about getting the right mix for the magazine and for our audience."



Born into Hollywood royalty—her grandmother was singer-comedienne Fanny Brice and her father is film mogul Ray Stark—contributing editor **Wendy Stark Morrissey** moves easily between Old Hollywood and the newer establishment. She also has a talent for putting people together. "Wendy is a writer's greatest asset," says special correspondent Bob Colacello. "She not only knows where the bodies are buried, she knows who buried them and what their phone numbers are." In addition, Morrissey has been instrumental in reuniting casts of famous movies for photo shoots. She helped produce this year's *Carnal Knowledge* group portrait, and for Hollywood issues past she brought together the cast of *American Graffiti* and reunited *Some Like It Hot* stars Jack Lemmon and Tony Curtis.

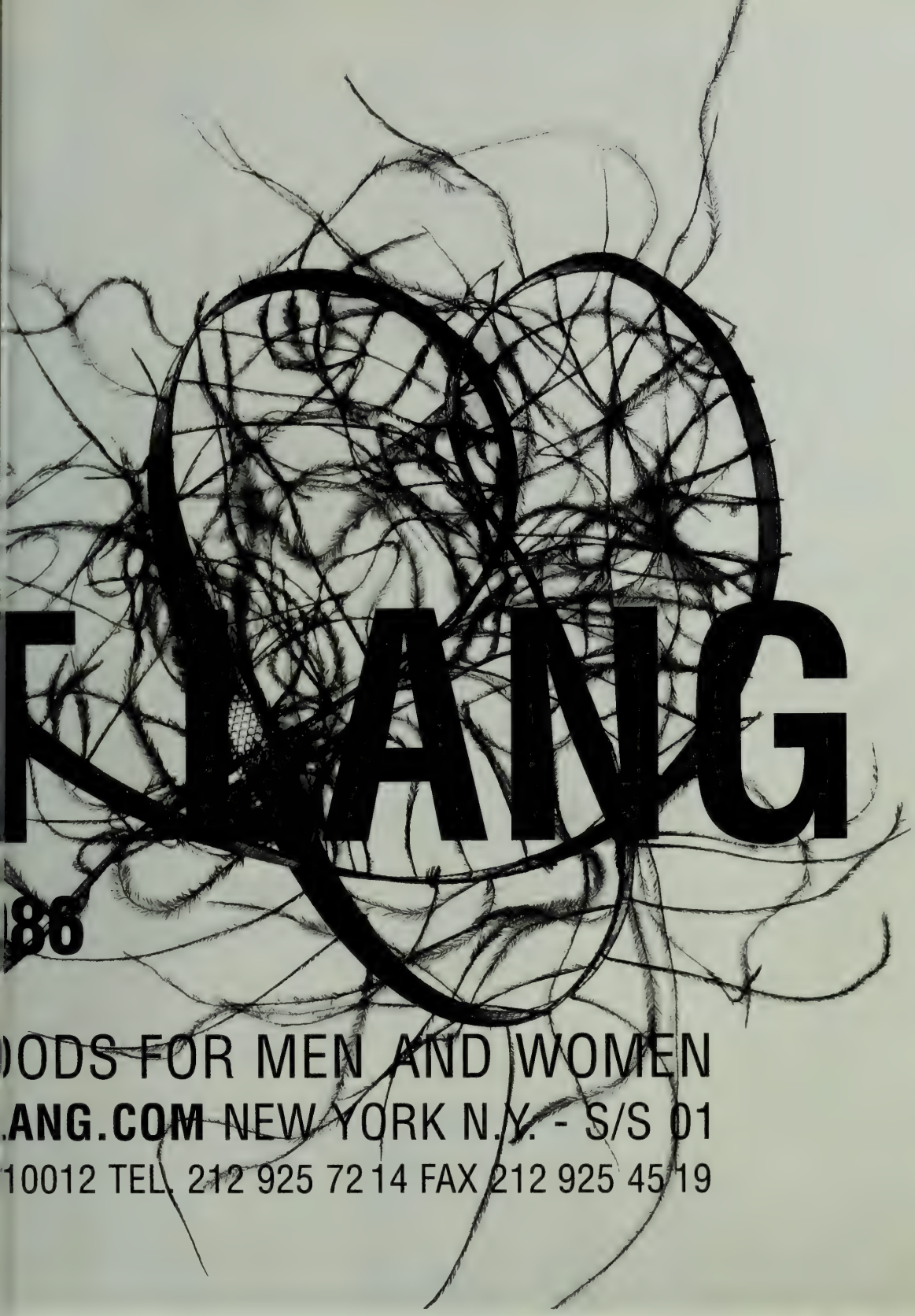
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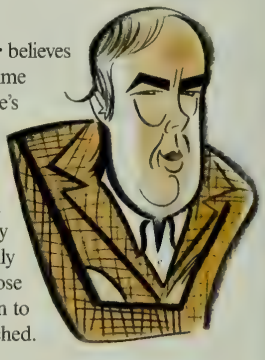


For more than 30 years, **Polly Mellen** has been a leading figure in the fashion industry, as an editor at *Vogue* and, until recently, as creative director of *Allure*, styling more shoots than one can count. So one might think that styling the 10 actresses on this month's cover, shot by Annie Leibovitz, would be just another job. In fact, "it was an experience in my career that I will never forget," says Mellen. "It added another dimension to my eye." The key to a successful shoot is being part of a joint effort, thinks Mellen. "I'm a team player," she says, "and today I wish there was more team playing going on. This cover is an example of such professionalism, such team playing, such caring, on the part of every actress. It was just a splendid moment."



SUNHEE GRINNELL

Contributing photographer **Helmut Newton** spent some time with the famously tough Michael Ovitz while shooting him for this month's issue, and had nothing but nice things to say afterward. "We really clicked, and I hope the photographs capture his *personnage*," says Newton, whose exhibition of some never-before-seen prints will open at Zurich's Galerie de Pury & Luxembourg in June. Newton also took portraits of Richard Pryor and Raquel Welch for the Hollywood portfolio. "Shooting Richard Pryor was a most moving experience," he says, "and I'm very proud of the picture. As for Raquel, I did many photographs of her 20 years ago or more, so it was interesting to go back to the scene of the crime."



RISKO

Contributing editor **James Wolcott** believes there's a reason why the pace and running time of today's films seem to resist the audience's ever shortening attention span. "In addition to huge budgets," Wolcott explains, "directors have more control now and want to stick in every bit of their 'vision.'" Independent films on smaller budgets aren't much different. "The imagery is more hyperkinetic, but the story isn't moving forward any faster. In the 30s, they really streamlined the work." On page 194, Wolcott revisits those pre-Code Hollywood films, which, in addition to zipping along, left no taboo untouched.



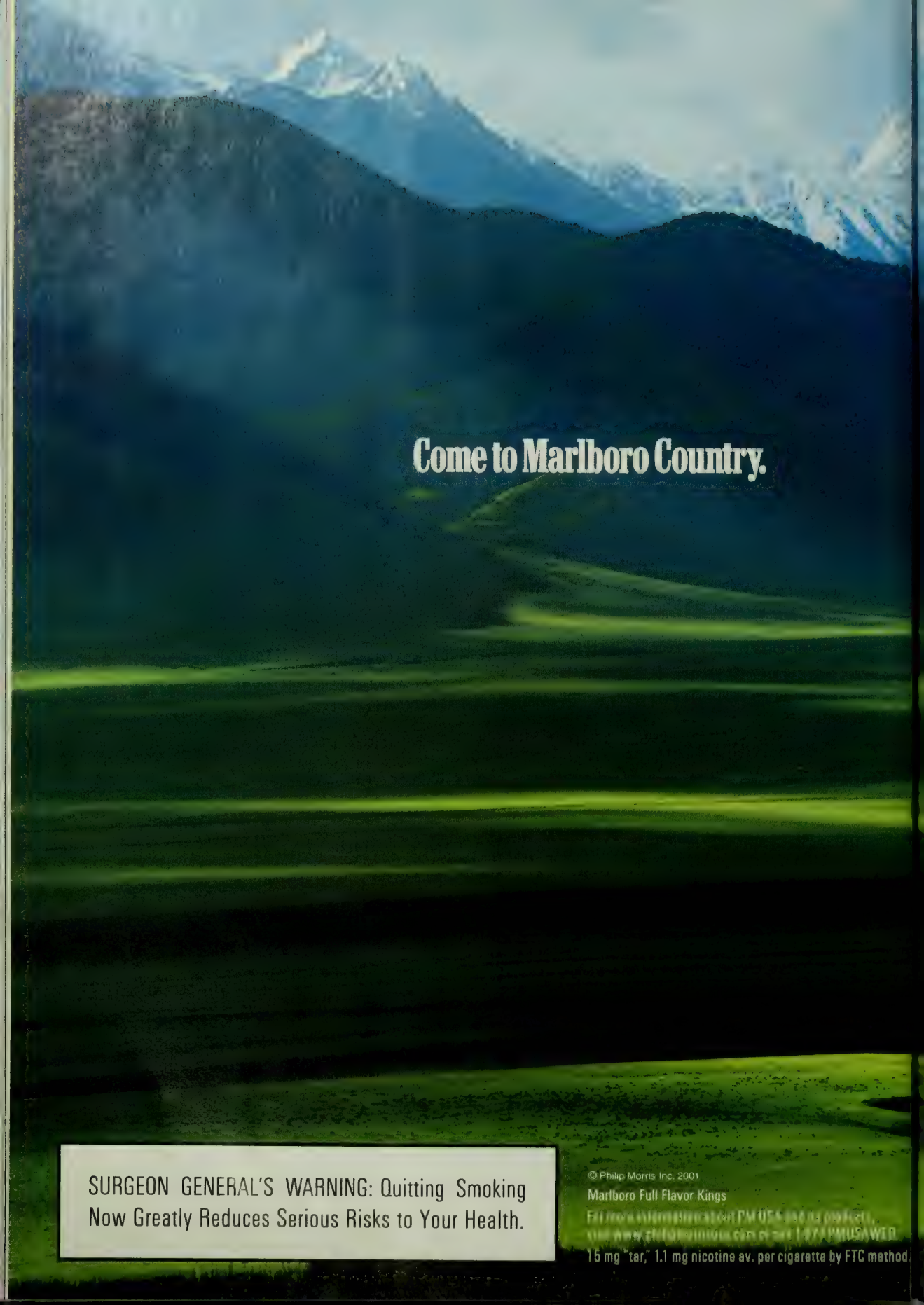
SUNHEE GRINNELL

After shooting Hollywood's brightest young talents for this month's portfolio, **Julian Broad** concluded that even the most professional of pre-adolescents, such as Hallie Kate Eisenberg, 8, and Jonathan Lipnicki, 10, don't like sitting still. "Group shots are always a challenge," says Broad. "Combine that with little people and you have a full day on your hands." In spite of their youth, they did seem to enjoy the grown-up perks. "I did rather love the sight of them each climbing out of their limos," says Broad. Also for this issue, Broad photographed a slightly older group of up-and-coming actors, actress Katharine Towne, and the Culkin brothers.


Liz claiborne




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FIRST LADIES

Measure them by number of movies made (399), Oscar awards and nominations received (27), or fantasies inspired (beyond calculation), the actresses gracing this month's cover are the perfect 10



AS GOOD AS IT GETS

Above, from left, Nicole Kidman (wearing a Maggie Norris bustier and skirt), Catherine Deneuve (wearing an Yves Saint Laurent Couture dress, Yves Saint Laurent shoes, and Harry Winston jewelry), Meryl Streep (wearing a Michael Kors sweater, Giorgio Armani skirt, and Jil Sander shoes), Gwyneth Paltrow (wearing a Jean Paul Gaultier Couture dress and Prada shoes), Cate Blanchett (wearing a suit and shirt by Christian Dior), Kate Winslet (wearing a Gianfranco Ferré coat and Michael Kors dress), Vanessa Redgrave (wearing a Catherine Walker coat and Robert Clergerie boots), Chloë Sevigny (wearing a Christian Dior dress), Sophia Loren (wearing a Giorgio Armani dress and shoes, Christian Dior coat, and Harry Winston jewelry), and Penélope Cruz (wearing a Ralph Lauren Collection dress). Set design by Stefan Beckman. Styled by Polly Mellen. Photographed exclusively for *V.F.* by Annie Leibovitz. *Below, from left,* Mellen, Leibovitz, Deneuve, and hairstylist Madeleine Cofano check out a Polaroid.

Nicole Kidman is flawless—and we mean it: we saw her naked during the 1998–99 London and Broadway runs of *The Blue Room,* directed by Sam Mendes. Her sexually charged performance opposite husband Tom Cruise (from whom she has recently separated) in Stanley Kubrick's 1999 *Eyes Wide Shut* allowed audiences to feel they knew her even better. Yes, Hollywood's most elegant Australian import knows how to create a buzz. American audiences were introduced to Kidman in the 1989 psychological thriller *Dead Calm.* In 1995 she starred in Gus Van Sant's *To Die For,* in which her wicked portrayal of a woman obsessed with becoming a TV personality won her a Golden Globe for best actress. This spring, Kidman will surely teach us a thing or two about the cancan in Baz Luhrmann's long-awaited musical, *Moulin Rouge.*

—PUNCH HUTTON

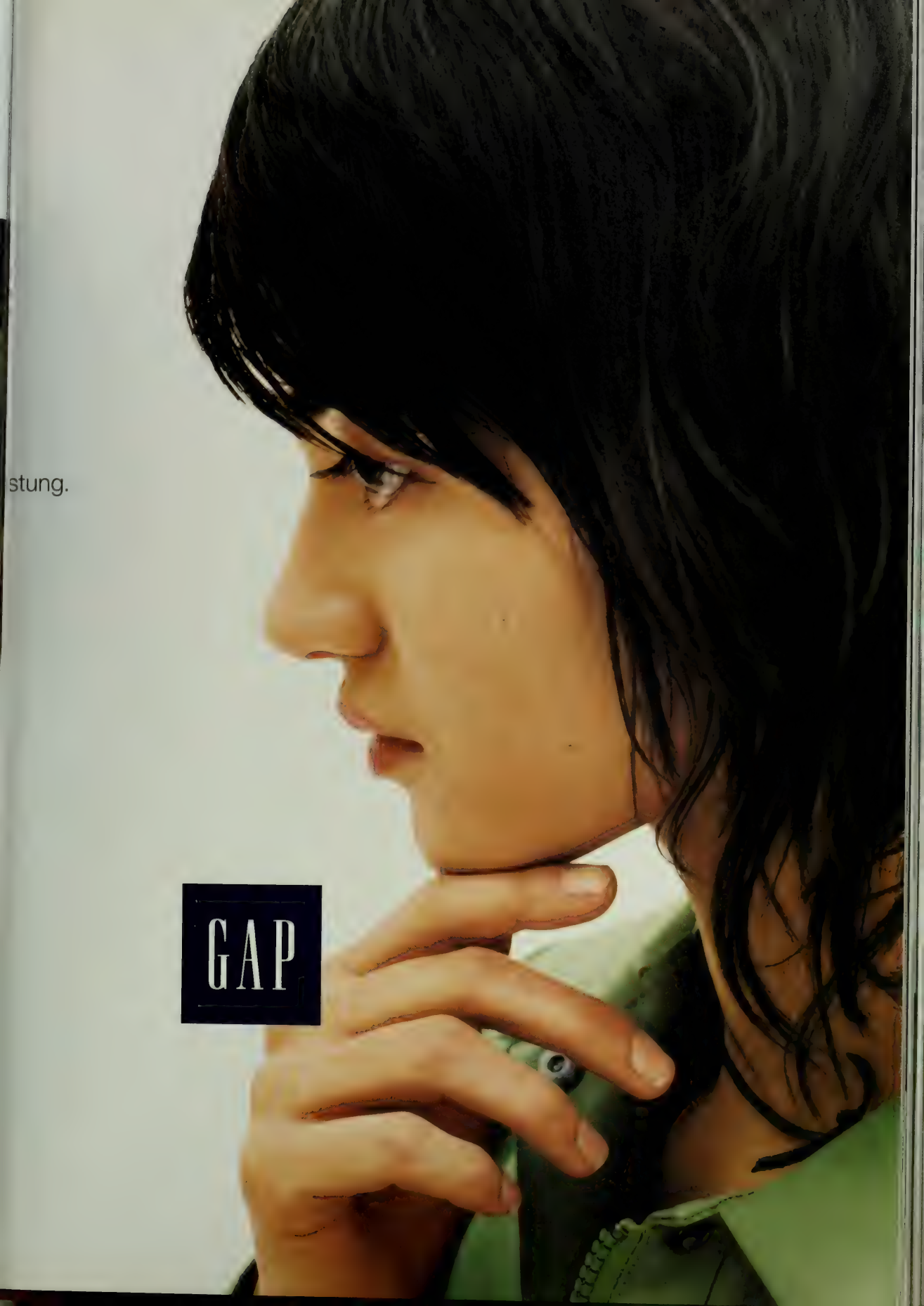
She is still one of the world's most beautiful women, and if she stopped working today, her status as one of the greatest film actresses of all time would be secure. Over the course of her 88 films, which include *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg, Belle de Jour, Repulsion, The Last Metro,* and *Indochine,* she has worked with everyone from Buñuel to Truffaut, personifying the bourgeois malaise of postwar Europe with minimalist precision. But **Catherine Deneuve** continues to seek out unexpected roles in interesting films (remember *Dancer in the Dark*?). And then there's her image: the lifelong muse of Yves Saint Laurent, the face of Chanel in the 70s and of France's Marianne in the 80s. Of this year's Legends of Hollywood cover, Deneuve says, "I came to New York just for this shoot. I think I would fly anywhere for Annie Leibovitz." She showed up at the studio with a pack of cigarettes, a cup of espresso, and a copy of *Le Monde,* then proceeded to charm all those present by being witty and so needlessly down-to-earth.

MICHAEL HOGAN



When **Meryl Streep** slept through the L.S.A.T.'s she had signed up for during a dark moment at the Yale Drama School, CONTINUED ON PAGE 134

stung.





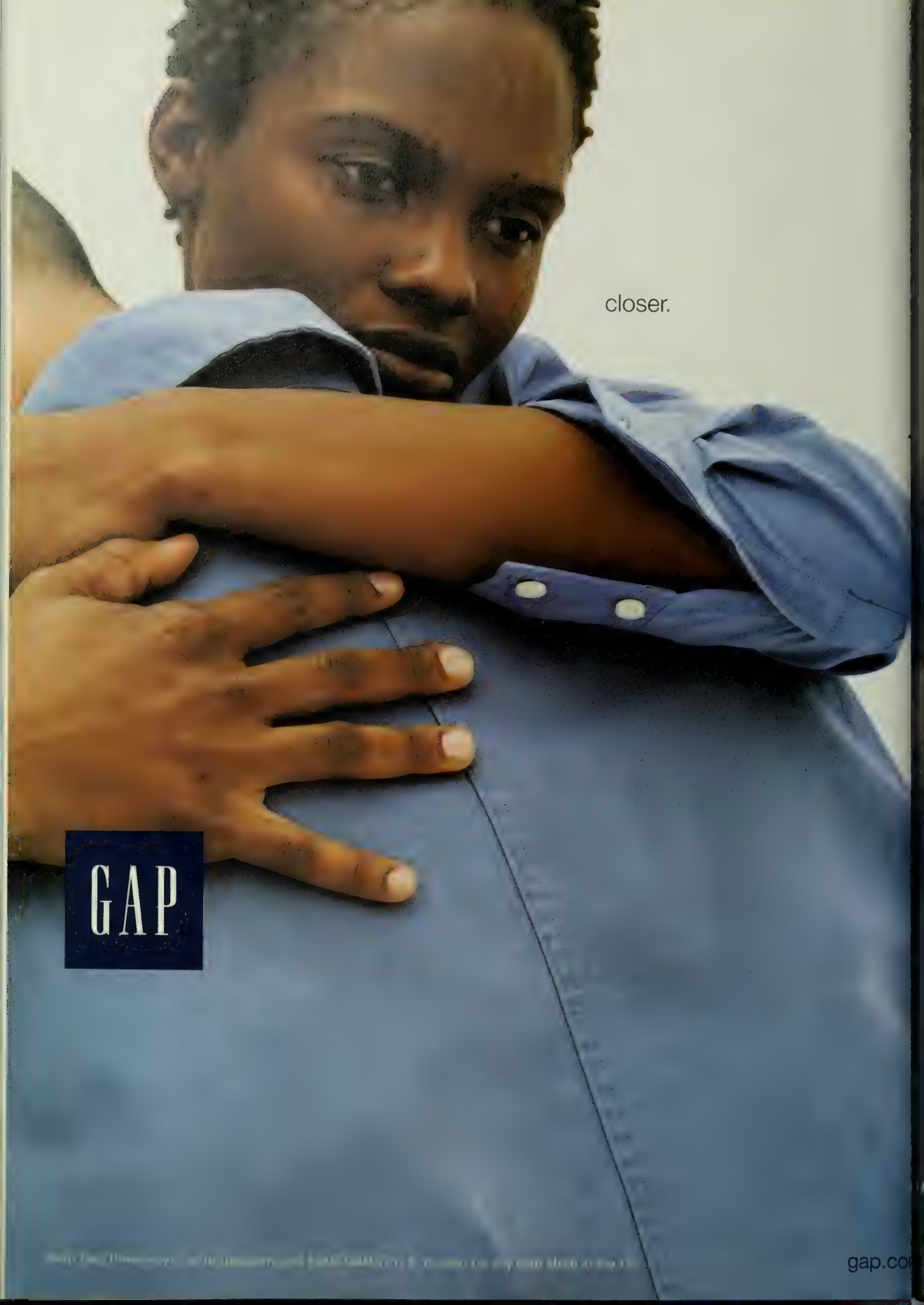











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SHE'S NICE AND A STAR! *From top:* Makeup artist Kevyn Aucoin, Kidman, and Paltrow share a moment; Kidman gives *V.F.* features editor Jane Sarkin a squeeze; Streep gets buffed by Deborah Lippmann as Paltrow looks on; Paltrow and Leibovitz get ready on the set, which was inspired by designer Carolina Herrera's New York apartment.





the [illegible] drama were proved just. [illegible] to come. *Kramer vs. Kramer*. *Sophie's Choice*. *The French Lieutenant's Woman*—most agree with Clint Eastwood when he cast her in *The Bridges of Madison County*. She was, he said with a shrug, "the greatest actress in the world." Her dedication to her art is famous: to prepare for her role as a violin teacher in 1999's *Music of the Heart*, she practiced the instrument six hours a day for four months. It paid off with her 12th Academy Award nomination; she's won two of the things. She'll appear on-screen next with Nicole Kidman, Julianne Moore, Ed Harris, and Claire Danes in director Stephen Daldry's adaptation of Michael Cunningham's Pulitzer Prize–winning novel, *The Hours*. And then there's the little matter of *The Seagull*—in Central Park this summer with Kevin Kline.

—MARC GOODMAN

Gwyneth Paltrow seems immune to the usual trappings of celebrity, driving her entourage-less self to the *V.F.* cover shoot and then playing D.J. Perhaps it's because she always figured she was going to be famous that she handles stardom so gracefully. As she once said, "Fame is like a pre-destined thing," and having grown up in the business doesn't exactly hurt. (Mom, as you may know, is film and theater actress Blythe Danner; Dad is television producer and movie director Bruce Paltrow.) But the 28-year-old perennial "It girl" has emerged as one of her generation's most respected actresses, and certainly its most luminous, through roles in films such as *Emma*, *Sliding Doors*, and *Shakespeare in Love*, for which her heart-stoppingly flawless performance earned her 1998's Oscar for best actress. Last year she went from being directed by Dad in *Duets* to starring with on-again, off-again beau Ben Affleck in the romantic drama *Bounce*. This year, she's slated to be seen in six films, among them: *The Royal Tenenbaums* (Wes Anderson's follow-up to *Rushmore*), in which she'll appear opposite Gene Hackman; and the Farrelly brothers' *Shallow Hal*.

—LAURA KANG

The fact that **Cate Blanchett** never really intended to become an actress is sure to dismay more than a few aspiring thespians. Ten years ago she was still a halfhearted acting student (yet to be discovered by Geoffrey Rush) who soon couldn't help winning multiple best-performance awards. She has since come on to moviegoing audiences like a storm, beginning with the underappreciated *Oscar and Lucinda* (1997), then the thunderous success of *Elizabeth* (1998), for which she won a Golden Globe as well as earned an Oscar nomination. Refusing to lose momentum, Blanchett followed with *An Ideal Husband* (1999), *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (1999), and, most recently, *The Gift* (2000). Her seemingly endless range and chameleon-like beauty allow her to transcend periods, nationalities, and genres—an ability that will be challenged still further by Peter Jackson's adaptation of J. R. R. Tolkien's trilogy, *The Lord of the Rings*, in which she will give her first cross-species performance, as an elf queen.

—ROBIN RIZZUTO

Hollywood may have expected **Kate Winslet**, after her Oscar-nominated performance as the spirited, corseted Rose in *Titanic*, to step regally into her assured status as an Opener of Blockbusters—but that held little appeal for the resolutely unpretentious 25-year-old. "Hollywood can more than take care of itself," Winslet has tartly noted, and she followed *Titanic* with more delicate, idiosyncratic films, such as *Hideous Kinky*, in which she played a hippie mom in Morocco, and Jane Campion's *Holy Smoke!*, in which she played a cult member opposite deprogrammer Harvey Keitel. Indeed, low-budget, arty fare has paid off richly for Winslet: it was on the set of *Hideous Kinky* that she fell in love with assistant director Jim Threapleton, now her husband and the father of their baby daughter, Mia. Her current films are Philip Kaufman's *Quills*, in which she plays a helpful chambermaid to Geoffrey Rush's Marquis de Sade, and *Enigma*, a British film (produced by Mick Jagger) about code breakers in World War II, which won praise at Sundance and is due out in theaters later this year.

—BRIDIE CLARK

CONTINUED ON PAGE 142

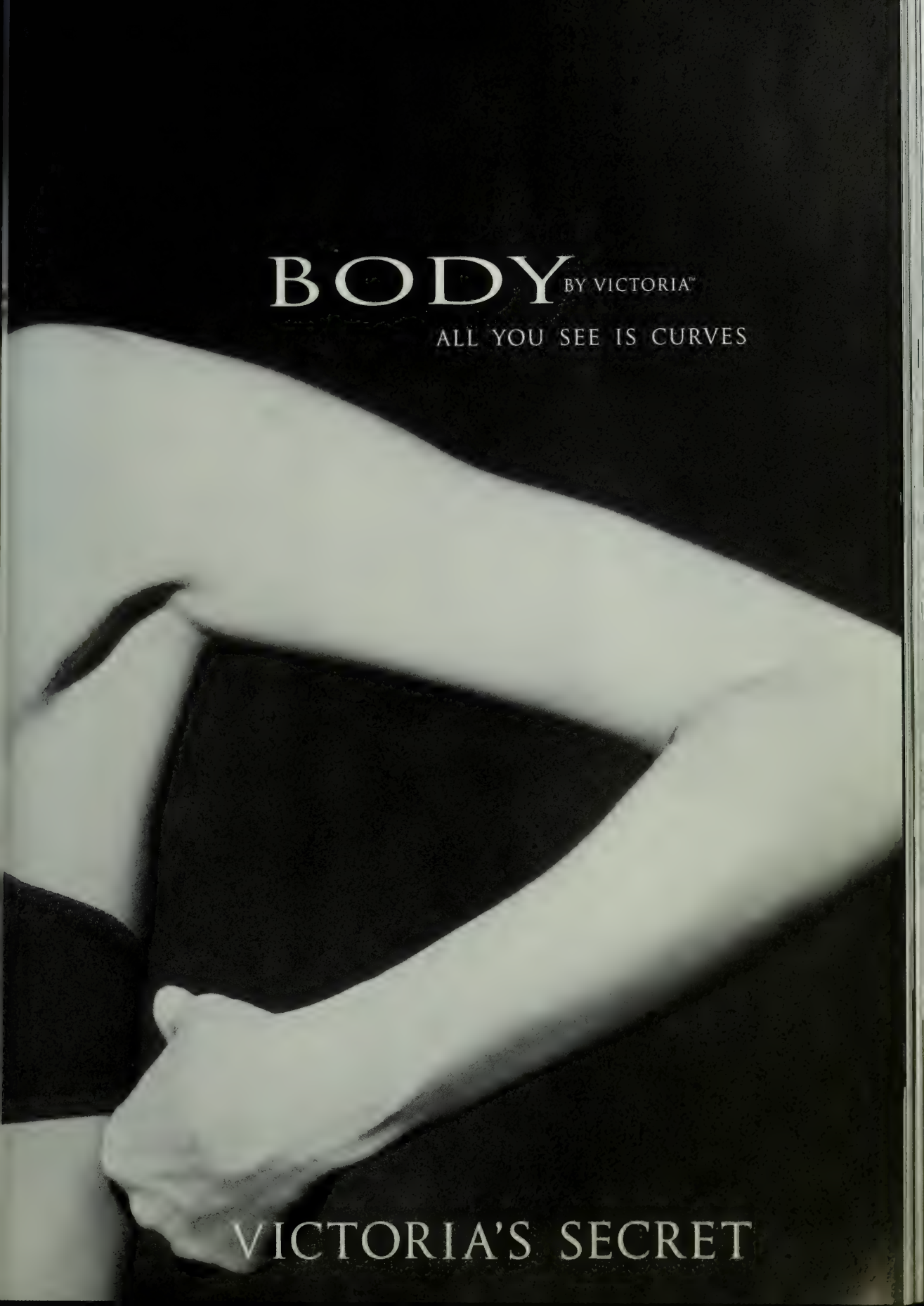
DAVID YURMAN

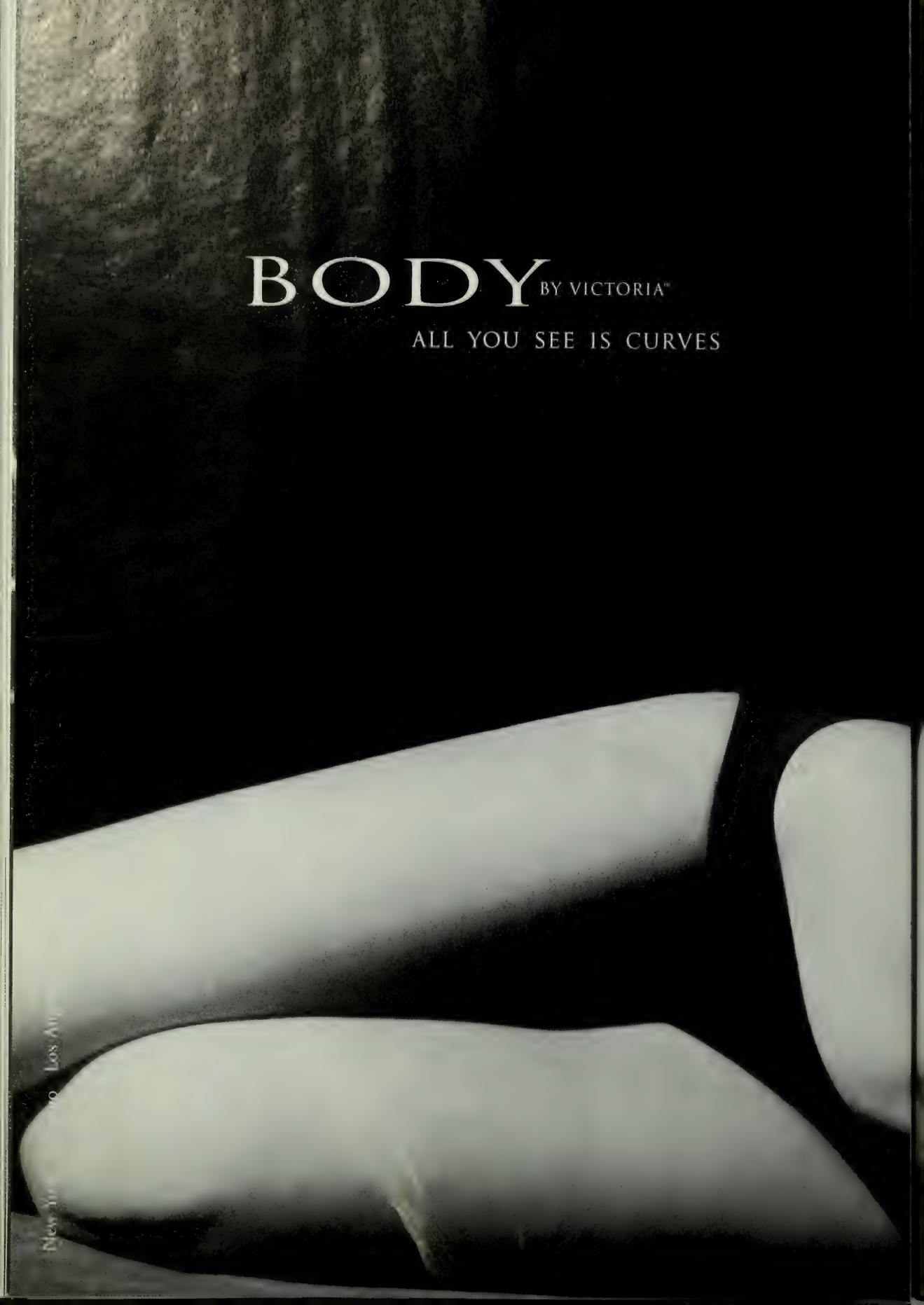


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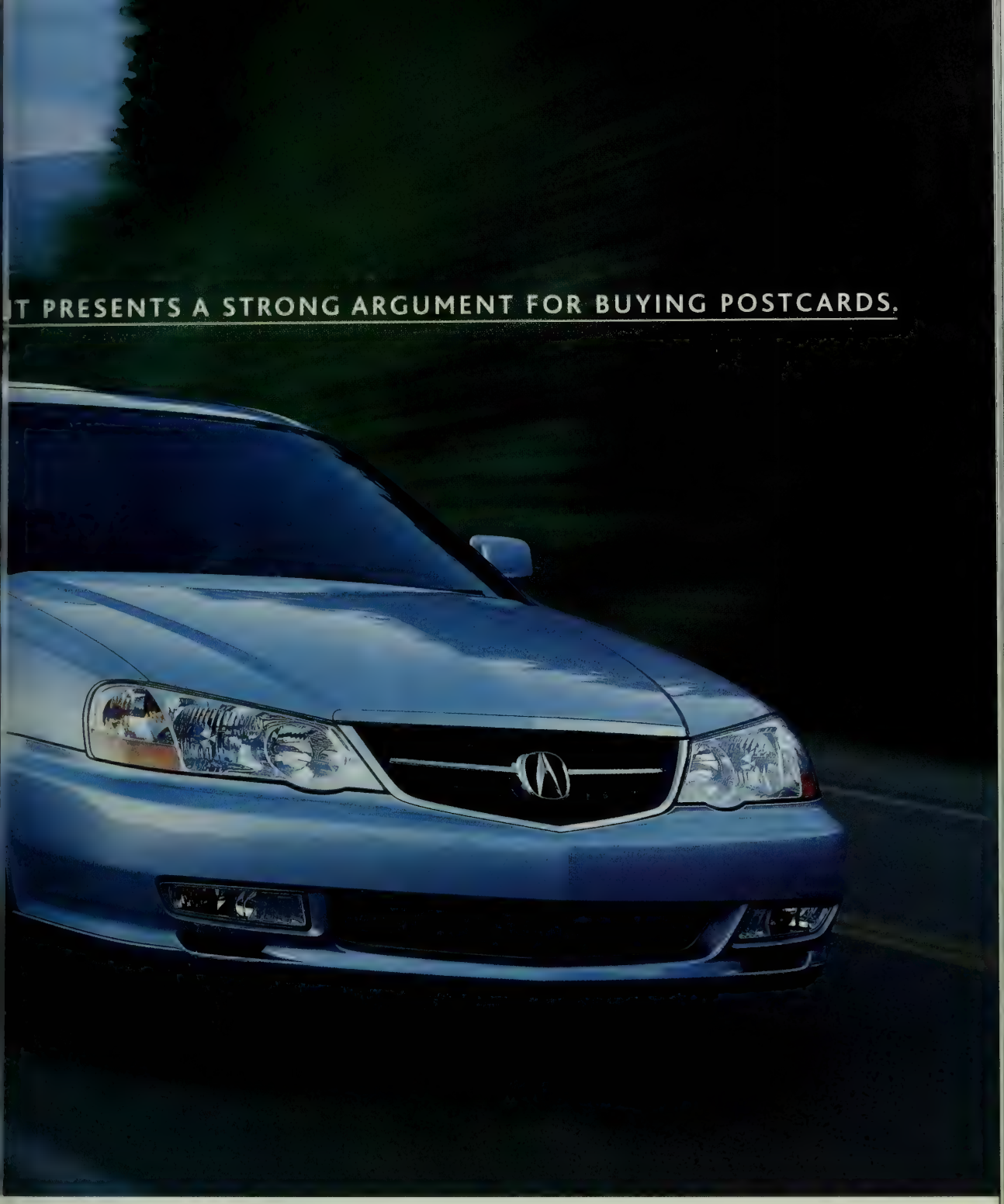

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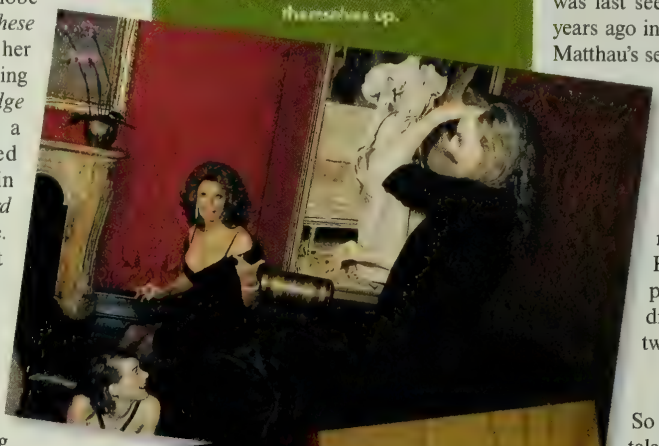


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KISS ME, KATE (OR CATE)! From above: Winslet and Blanchett are ready for their close-up; Loren entertains Sevigny and Leibovitz; Blanchett, Redgrove, and Leibovitz take him; Paltrow and Kidman crack themselves up.







It is safe to say that **Vanessa Redgrave** is unique in Hollywood. While it is rare for an actor's career to span more than 40 years, 80 films, and countless stage productions, it is even more rare for an actor to be as committed to her causes as to her craft. Redgrave has famously—and sometimes notoriously—supported the P.L.O., the I.R.A., and the Workers Revolutionary Party. Most recently she has turned her political attention to Kosovo and Chechnya. Fortunately, she does have time to act: she has given Oscar-nominated performances in *Isadora; Mary, Queen of Scots; Julia* (for which she won best supporting actress); and *The Bostonians.* She also won a Golden Globe this year for HBO's *If These Walls Could Talk 2.* Before her most recent turn, as a grieving grandmother in *The Pledge* (Sean Penn's third film as a director), Redgrave teamed with her brother, Corin, in Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* for London's National Theatre. Her fifth decade as a pro, it appears, is set to be just as rewarding as the others.

—SIOBHAN McDEVITT

Chloë Sevigny, 26, has chosen her roles with an idiosyncratic esprit, taking parts that have ranged from a preppy publishing peon in Whit Stillman's *The Last Days of Disco* to Lana Tisdel, the lover of Hilary Swank's transgendered teen in 1999's *Boys Don't Cry.* The latter role, in which Sevigny bravely essayed one of the screen's frankest—and wittiest—orgasms, earned her an Oscar nomination for best supporting actress. Meanwhile, wary of the mainstream, she has rejected parts in potential blockbusters other actresses would kill for. She is currently trying her hand at directing one of the three vignettes in *Jokes,* a film adapted from the life's work of Milton Berle. Sevigny's unconventional muse also extends to the world of fashion, where she's famous for looking cutting-edge in either thrift-store castoffs or haute couture—or, typically, both at once. Without aid from the stylist at our cover shoot, she unblinkingly selected a gorgeous black lace number by Christian Dior.

—DAISY HO

"The girl makes you think all the wrong thoughts," said Clark Gable of **Sophia Loren,** his co-star in *It Started in Naples.* That was some 40 years ago, but with those legs, those eyes, that jaw, that décolletage, she's still making men think those thoughts. The star of 86 films—even the ones of which she was not *the* star—Loren was presented with an honorary Academy Award in 1991 and is the only woman to have won a best-actress Oscar for a performance in a foreign film, 1961's *Two Women.* Loren was last seen by American audiences six years ago in her memorable role as Walter Matthau's seductress in *Grumpier Old Men.* "I could work every day," she says, "but you have to choose the right things, gifts to yourself. Otherwise it's better to stay home, read wonderful books, work in another domain, or just look at a sunset." Her next picture may be the perfect gift: a film written and directed by the younger of her two sons, 27-year-old Edoardo.

—STEPHEN LEVEY

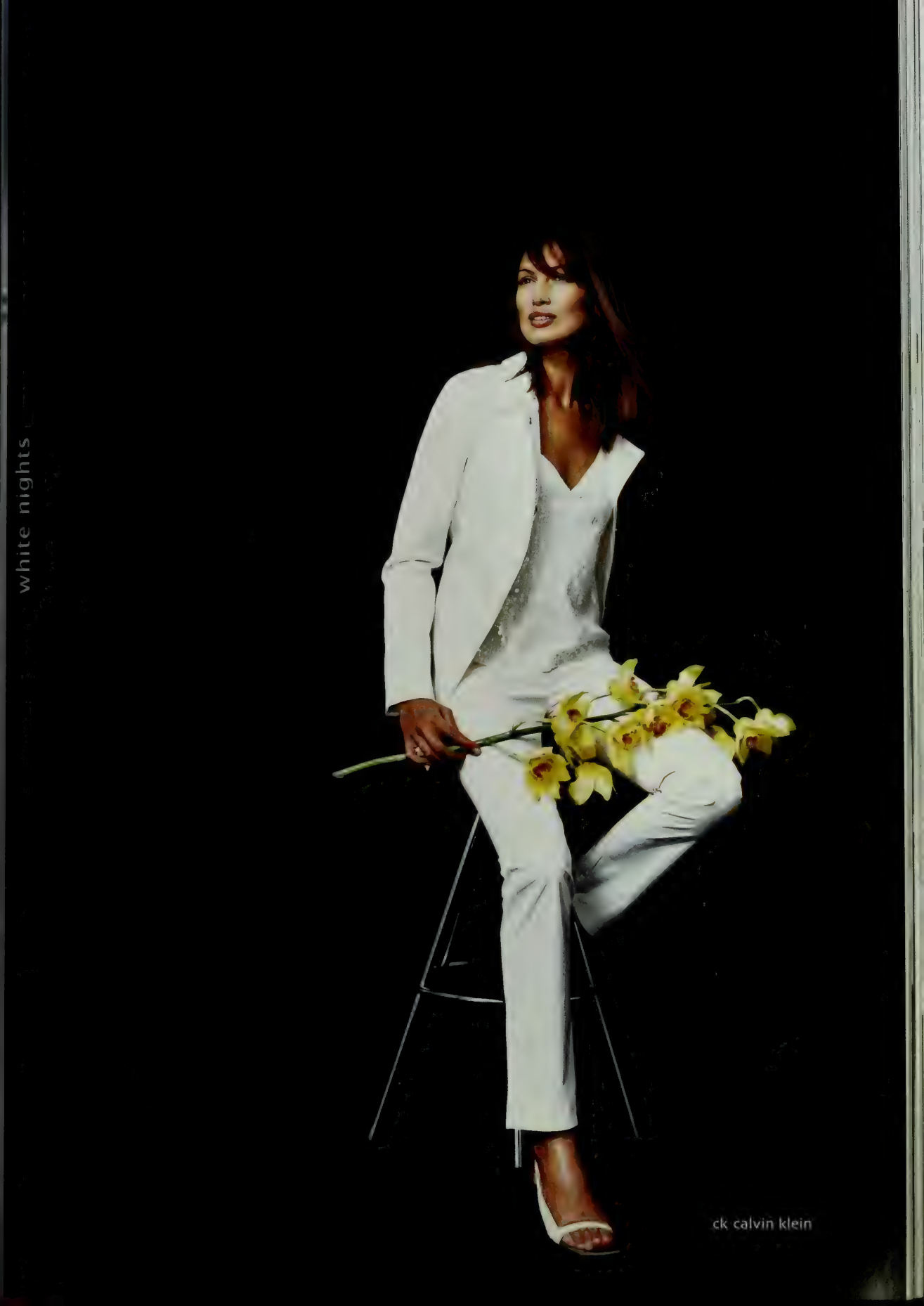
So how does one go from young talent one year to legend the next? **Penélope Cruz,** the first star to land on successive covers of *V.F.*'s annual Hollywood issue, should know. After all, the 26-year-old Madrid native is hardly a novice, having appeared in 25 movies in Spain and the United States, including last year's *All the Pretty Horses* and *Woman on Top,* her first American star vehicle. Her breakout performance came in 1992's *Belle Époque,* the first of two films she starred in that went on to win Oscars for best foreign-language film (the second was Pedro Almodóvar's 1999 *All About My Mother*). "I always find it sad when a film ends," Cruz has said, and she must mean it, since she never stops working, or so it seems. This year she will be seen on-screen in three films, including Cameron Crowe's *Vanilla Sky,* where her co-star is an actor named Tom whose last name is a homophone for hers.

—CAITLIN MORLEY

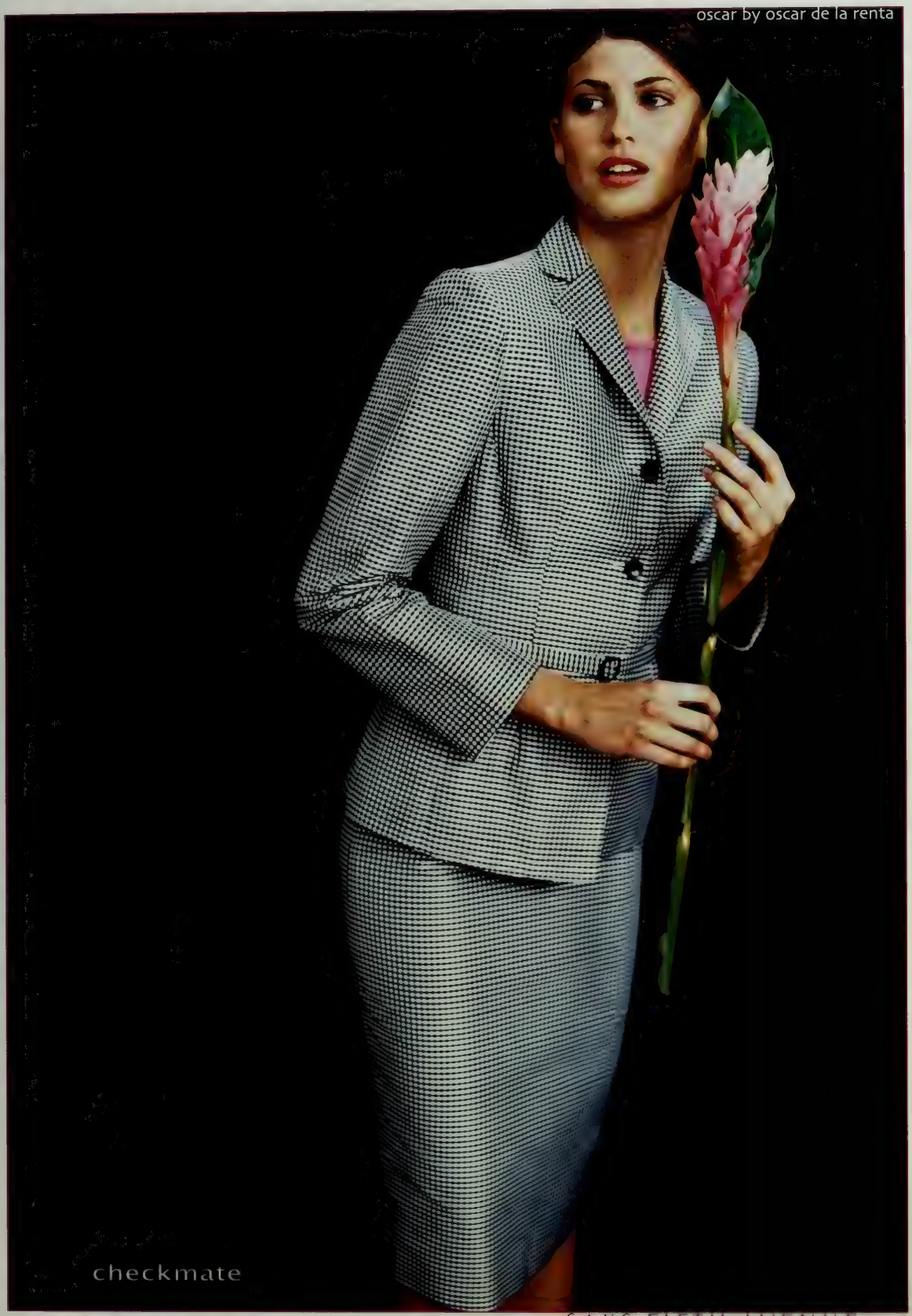

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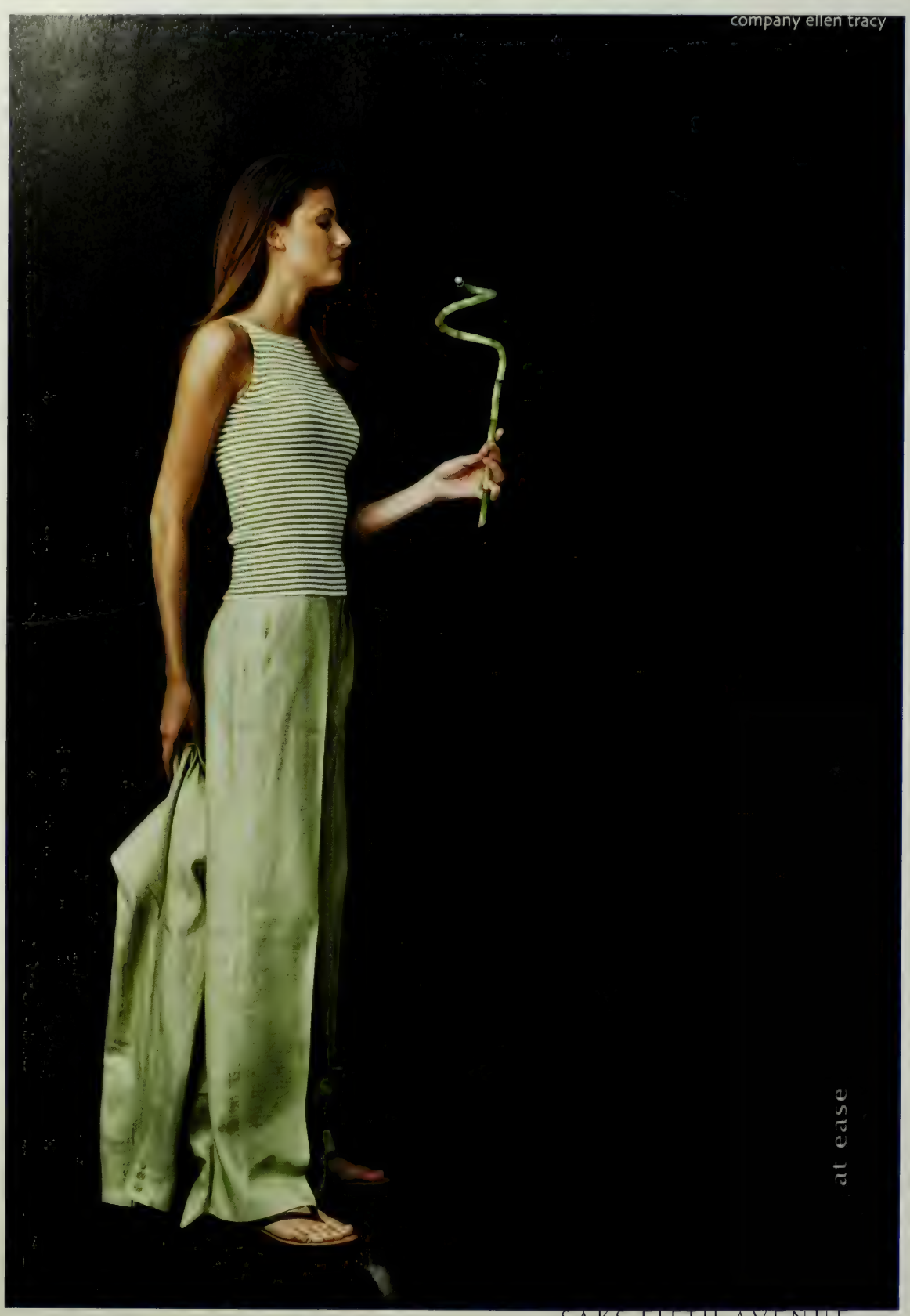


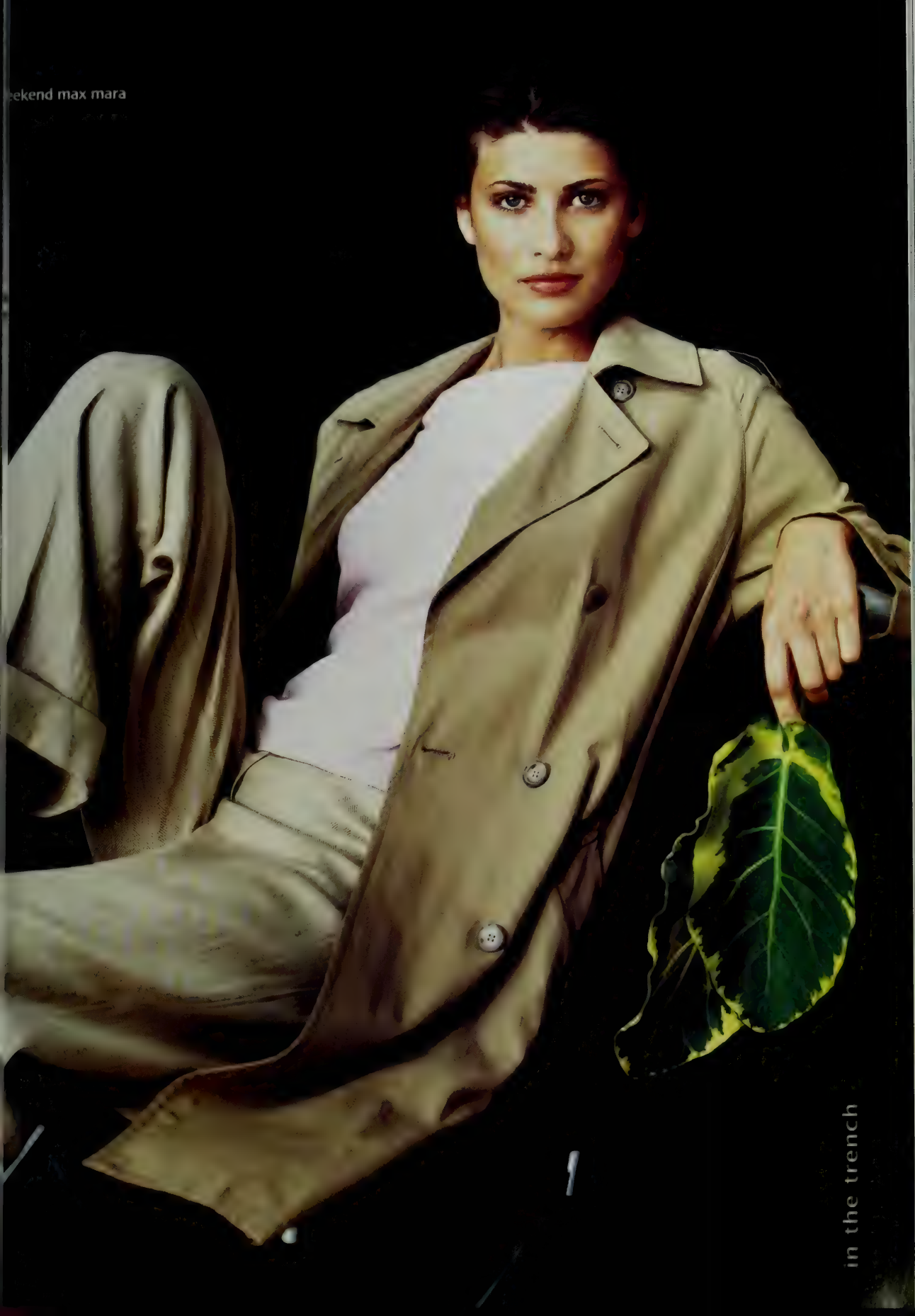
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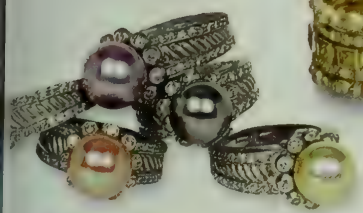

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Diamond Collection reflects the casual trend in dressing. The dark blue of ceylon sapphire
hes this look perfectly," notes Ms. Panos. This season, stackable, chunky rings and
lets continue to define the fashion flexibility of the Doris Panos line
sexy necklaces that dip into the cleavage create a
ely sensual look. From daytime chic to evening
nce, Doris Panos' extraordinary jewelry
hes the many moods of the contemporary
en for whom she designs.









Clockwise from top:
The designer Doris Panos, in her own creations; 18k yellow gold bangles and rings with yellow sapphires and diamond accents; 18k white gold stacked bangles with sapphires and diamonds; assorted colored-gem rings; assorted 18k white gold Fleur rings featuring natural-colored pearls with diamonds.



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Big Sugar has a not-so-sweet message; O. Winston Link's life on the tracks; Bennington College shows its report card; the counsel approaches Dominick Dunne; and more



CANE AND ABLE
Former Fanjul employee and key witness for the plaintiffs, Michael Cameron, with machete and shin guard, in front of a sugar plant in Belle Glade, Florida, on October 10, 1999.

In the Kingdom of Big Sugar

Marie Brenner's article on Big Sugar ["In the Kingdom of Big Sugar," February] was both fascinating and disturbing. Most important, it serves to remind us that when federal agencies, led by Cabinet appointees, make so many discretionary policy decisions that affect people's lives, the choice of a president matters; that when those decisions are influenced by substantial corporate campaign contributions, the effort to limit "soft money" matters; and that when so many are without the financial resources to protect themselves, the existence of legal-services organizations and dedicated attorneys such as Edward Tuddenham matters.

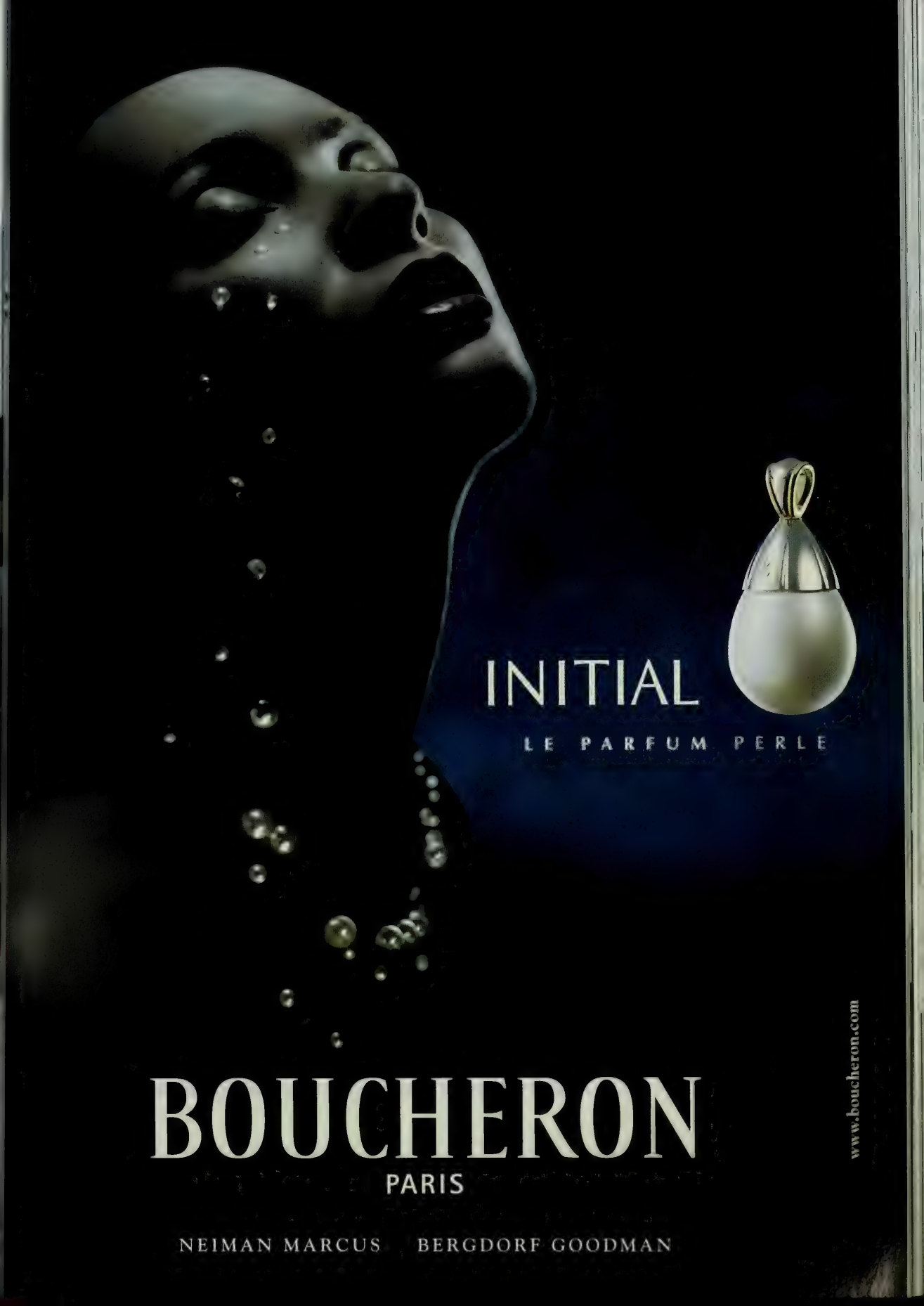
ADRIAN SEVIER
Alexandria, Virginia

AS LONG AS OUR government continues to support businessmen such as Alfy and Pepe Fanjul, the profits will continue to soar at the workers' expense. The practice of denying the poor and the uneducated justice, dignity, and respect is as old as the feudal landscape itself. I lived in South Florida during the mid-80s and found that this philosophy was firmly planted in the minds of those "lords" who perpetuate its practice.

The Fanjuls are not exceptional businessmen. It appears they merely sough out desperate people and preyed upo their dreams for a better life. While th claims of the plaintiffs may not hold u in a court of law, in that higher court o ethics and morality, the Fanjuls' action will not go without judgment.

E. G. MIRANDA SANTON
Virginia City, Nevad

NOW, WHENEVER I see one of the Fan jul women in the society pages, I wil always think of how the family made


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its wealth by exploiting the workers. It took guts to write this article.

BARBARA GARIFE
New York, New York

EACH MONTH, I look forward to reading your magazine. The story "In the Kingdom of Big Sugar" caught my eye, as Alfonso and Lillian Fanjul were good friends of mine. I was the marketing manager for National Airlines in Palm Beach and would assist with the many V.I.P.'s who visited our area. The picture on page 118 of the Fanjuls with King Leopold and his wife hangs on the wall in my travel-agency office. I was disappointed that you did not identify me, as I am the only one in that group who is still alive!

PAUL L. BELL
Ocean Ridge, Florida

EDITOR'S NOTE: The wife of King Leopold III, Princess Lilian, is, in fact, still alive, and living outside of Brussels.

THE ARTICLE "In the Kingdom of Big Sugar" is a modern-day morality play that is similar to, though less humorous than, Carl Hiaasen's novel *Striptease.* Written like a proposal for a screenplay, the article doesn't hesitate to stretch the facts. It features a conspiratorial theme that suggests that the events of today, including the presidential election, are being secretly manipulated. There is also an effort to show the human side of the protagonist, so that readers will nod approvingly, anchored in Herman Melville's belief that human nature is in some measure both good and evil.

At best, the article is historically based fiction. Did the Fanjuls really choreograph George W. Bush's recount victory? Come on. Did our farms not make good on their agreements with labor? However artfully written, the article cannot overcome the central fact that two independent juries and an appeals court confirmed that we complied with our contracts. In part, this unfounded litigation cost a lot of hard-working, decent men their jobs.

JORGE DOMINICIS
Vice president of corporate relations
Florida Crystals
Palm Beach, Florida

THE STATEMENT "[Pepe and Alfy Fanjul's grandfather] Jose Gomez-Mena died in Florida without a will" is absolutely false. Our firm and I represented Jose Gomez-Mena's daughter, Lillian, and her husband, Alfonso, with reference to various matters pertaining to Jose Gomez-Mena's estate and, more particularly, [Lillian's stepmother,] Elizarda Sampedro Gomez-Mena. The public records and review of our file reveal that the last will and testament of Jose Gomez-Mena was in fact probated in Palm Beach County, Florida, and that letters testamentary were issued to Alfonso Fanjul Sr., the executor named therein, on July 17, 196[illegible].

Jose Gomez-Mena and Elizarda, in anticipation of their January 8, 1939, marriage, executed a pre-marital agreement on December 30, 1937, which provided that they were to be married "under the regime of absolute and complete separation of present and future assets." Our involvement in the matter indicated to us that Elizarda was always treated with the most fairness by the Fanjul family and that, as evidenced by the amicable ultimate resolution in the matter, she received everything to which she was entitled.

The unkind quote referring to Elizarda's jewelry, which you ascribed to Lillian Fanjul, now deceased and therefore unable to rebut your statement, and your disparaging characterization of the Fanjul family in general stand in stark contrast to my own firsthand experience.

JOHN C. STRICKRO[illegible]
Miami, Flor[illegible]

THE CHATTERING CLASS

BRAVO, MR. WOLCOTT ["Punditry f[illegible] Dummies," by James Wolcott, Febr[illegible] ary]. You have come closer than an[illegible] one else to explaining how I becam[illegible] one of the nameless, faceless, homog[illegible] nized group known as "the America[illegible] People." It may have started with B[illegible] Clinton, who ran the country by po[illegible] rather than principle. And it sure[illegible] continues with the pundits, who appa[illegible] ently can't say "many Americans" [illegible] "most Americans."

For example, "the American People[illegible] thought Elián González should go bac[illegible] to his father in Cuba. Well, I didn[illegible] Also, "the American People" and mo[illegible] of the pundits appear to think it is th[illegible] government's responsibility to prote[illegible] our children from Internet vultures, vi[illegible] lent movies, hateful rap lyrics, and boo[illegible] with nude figures such as Mauri[illegible] Sendak's *In the Night Kitchen.* The[illegible] pundits are "reporters" who base the[illegible] careers on the First Amendment. Y[illegible] it seems they'd rather follow popul[illegible] opinion than stand up and say the wo[illegible] "censorship." It is easier to be one of th[illegible] herd.

Oh well, this American person mu[illegible] trot off to order something on QVC befo[illegible] watching *Survivor* while taping *Temptati*[illegible]



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Island. You, Mr. Wolcott, are a gem. Don't let us become even more complacent.

ELLEN SATHER
Eugene, Oregon

WHAT ABOUT BOB?

I THOUGHT THE ARTICLE on Paula Yates was vastly interesting ["The Perils of Paula," February]. But I am curious as to why Steven Daly seemed to be putting a negative slant on Bob Geldof throughout his story.

What responsible father would le children travel halfway across the w for three months to visit a mother in between her Mary Poppins mom is partying like it's 1999? Particu when she's alongside her new mate, v prone to imbibing so much liquor drugs that he'll hang his silly self?

I have to side with the British pres this one: I will now refer to Geldo "Saint Bob, Protector of Children."

KATHY BRA
Downers Grove, I

LIFE ON THE RAILS

MY IMAGE NO. NW1103, *Hot Shot East Bound* was a perfect selection "Shooting Past 80," by David Friend, January, and it was given a bea layout. It also gives us an idea of what that engine looks like when working. This is so important to those who haven't had the thrill of seei Norfolk & Western A-class at work.

For the shoot, the Norfolk Southern's locomotive shop performed i usual manner, with the full cooperation of the C.E.O., Mr. David Go We had a wonderful relationship over 40 years. I provided all my ph to them at no cost in exchange for getting what I needed to produce images I envisioned. There was nothing in writing. That freedom ma possible to produce what I did.

N&W loved its engines. All of them were of the company's own de and were manufactured, from frames to complete locomotives, in the noke shop. Much can be written about this love affair.

From 1955 to 1960, the word was out: Give Link what he wants— steam locomotives to work with, 2,500 miles of track, access to train phones, my own switch key, and 20,000 employees. They "gave" me whole railroad. I have no stock in N&W, N.S., or any other railroad. T were no gifts or subsidies to finance this project. I financed it myself.

O. WINSTON
Mt. Kisco, New

EDITOR'S NOTE: One month after writing this letter, O. Winston Link died, at the age o



GHOST IN THE MACHINE
O. Winston Link, photographed by Michael O'Neill in front of the steam engine No. 12 at the Norfolk Southern locomotive shop in Roanoke, Virginia, on August 2, 2000.


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BABE WITH THE BATHWATER
Lara Flynn Boyle, photographed by David LaChapelle in Malibu, California, on November 15, 2000.

BENNINGTON'S INTELLIGENCE REPORT

BENNINGTON COLLEGE the flagship campus of "Schools of the Dumb Rich"? Bennington students and alumni are famously good-humored—and sometimes just famous—but they aren't anything like your parody at their expense (Intelligence Report: The Colleges, by Adam Leff and Richard Rushfield, February). More than half of this year's freshman class graduated in the top 10 percent of their high-school class, and more than 70 percent of our students receive some form of financial aid. The class you chose *is* one of our most popular, but its real title is "The Biology of the Sexes," a science class taught by respected animal physiologist Elizabeth Sherman. Also, you didn't mention that Steven Bach, the former head of worldwide production at United Artists and author of the splendid feature on Moss Hart in the same issue of your magazine, is a faculty member at Bennington. Come on, guys, less Vanity and more Fair.

DAVID REES
Director of communications and external relations, Bennington College
Bennington, Vermont

I CAN PERSONALLY ASSURE you that I am neither "dumb" nor "rich." I work 20 hours a week during the school year and full-time on vacations to afford to attend this amazing school. I am on a very generous financial-aid plan, but very proud of the fact that I'm putting myself through school. My friends also rely heavily on their financial-aid plans, and let me reassure you that we are *not* the minority. In high school I maintained a 4.02 average (the .02 is due to weightier courses) and was the edit the school paper and literary maga and head of the honor society.

I chose to go to Bennington becau its innovative method of education a receive the benefits of small classes, on-one tutorials, and very challen courses—as opposed to what was im by "Sex with Betsy," which is act called "The Biology of the Sexes" a one of the most difficult and well-l courses Bennington has to offer.

LARRABY FELL
Bennington, Ve

AS TWO DUAL-MAJOR sophomore Michigan State University, we take ext offense to your Intelligence Report: Colleges. First of all, listing Georg Bush as the poster child is simply ri lous. Not only did he attend Yale, his ical beliefs hardly reflect the beliefs o majority of the student body, neither at Michigan State University nor at cross-state rival, the University of Mich Additionally, we find the motto ("The five years of my life") extremely offer Even with two majors, we both will f in four years, as will many other Big 1 dents. The Big 10 is one of the most h respected conferences in the nation, frankly, we expected more from *Vanity*

LUCY CUNNINGHAM AND BETSY BI
East Lansing, Mic

MAKE WAY FOR LARA

SO, WOMEN LEAVE the room when Flynn Boyle enters ["Call of the Wild Kevin Sessums, February]? Maybe it'

Anna Kournikova's Choice



Tennis star Anna Kournikova chooses
the Constellation «Quadra» in steel

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I WONDER WHAT YOUR WATER IS MOSTLY MADE OF? -KENNETH COLE
KENNETH COLE new york

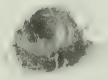
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cigarette smoke, or perhaps they're just running to hide the toiletries.

MISIA DUDLEY
New York, New York

SO WHY *WASN'T* Lara Flynn Boyle on the cover? Your succinct explanation, which appeared on the cover, did not appease me. If I was at a party and she graced us with her company, I certainly would not leave. I say *yes* to the glamorous-Hollywood-dame thing! *The Practice*'s Helen Gamble needs to have a little more Lara in her. At least she would get laid.

CARLA GAYTAN
Brooklyn, New York

MS. BOYLE would do well to familiarize herself with the meaning of a Roman Catholic annulment before labeling herself a "bastard" and saying she doesn't trust the Catholic Church. The formal case instructions provided by the church specifically state, "A Declaration of Invalidity of a marriage does not in any way whatsoever affect the legitimacy in church or civil law of any children born of that union."

Perhaps that will make Ms. Boyle feel better.

MEGHAN BADWEY CONGER
Kansas City, Missouri

KEANU'S GOOD VIBRATIONS

THANKS FOR SUCH an insightful article on Keanu Reeves ["Keanu, from Both Sides Now," by Ned Zeman, February]. It's easy to see why he is, in his words, the critics' "favorite whipping boy." He's not afraid to admit that he has experimented with drugs or that he has done less than interesting work to pay the bills. He'd rather be unattached than in an unfulfilling relationship, a choice that has garnered him not respect but endless queries about his sexual preference. As much as Reeves's detractors would protest, it seems that he is a figure to emulate. He lives without compromise, has come to terms with a problematic past, and has somehow found a way to be forgiving of all those who have been unkind to him.

ALISON E. ORFORD
New York, New York

DEFENDING THE DEFENSE

AS DEFENSE COUNSEL for the accused Mr. Ted Maher, we are deeply offended by Dominick Dunne's speculation in the December issue that we are following the "party line" ["Death in Monaco"]. Both Maître Georges Blot and I have built our professional reputations on the foundation of providing independent and effective representation of our clients. Pursuant to the consistent observance of our duty, we must reject any influence conflicting with our ability to defend Mr. Maher vigorously.

The further implication in the Dunne article that we refused to provide Mrs. Maher with an English translation of the French fire report due to her inability to pay $1,000 is demonstrably false and any reasonable investigation of the facts would have shown it to be so. I am acting on Mr. Maher's behalf on a pro bono basis and paid for the translation of the fire report out of my own funds. I was prohibited from releasing it to any third party by direct order of the investigating magistrate and the presiding official of the Monaco Bar Association. This fact is known to both Mr. Maher and his wife.

DONALD MANA
Nice, Fra

THE DEATH OF A LEGEND?

I ENJOY THE MAGAZINE so much I hesitate to make a suggestion, but I've been hesitating for nearly two years, so here goes. Try forbidding the use of "legendary" in even one issue. Just think how much fresh language could be used if this term were junked.

MARILYN GEORG
Silsbee, Te

EDITOR'S REPLY: We will try to curb the use of the word "legendary," reserving it for emergency cases only, like cover lines and references to Swifty Lazar and some of our own particularly insecure contributors.

CORRECTION: In the December 2000 issue, on page 363 ("Damien Hirst's Lost Weekend," by Nancy Jo Sales), we quoted Hirst as saying that he gave Tracey Emin a painting. Hirst was referring to another person, not Emin.

Letters to the editor should be sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number to *Vanity Fair*, 4 Times Square, New York, New York 10036. Address electronic letters to the editor at letters@vf.com. All requests for back issues should be sent to FAIR@neodata.com. All other queries should be sent to vfmail@vf.com. The magazine reserves the right to edit submissions, which may be published or otherwise used in any medium. All submissions become the property of *Vanity Fair*.

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The trouble started when one of the Moroccans grabbed Claudio's Viking helmet. It was plastic with fake rubies along the rim and two horns on top, and the Moroccan shouted that it had been stolen from him the night before and what kind of swine would steal a man's helmet. It was festival time and Claudio was in a t-shirt and shorts with a leather wineskin over his shoulder. He spun around and got a grip on the plastic rim and two of his friends jumped in and then another Spaniard with nothing better to do got his hand on it. The other patrons made room for whatever problem was coming and the five men stood glaring at each other in the middle of the sawdust floor with the helmet gripped between them.

"Idiotas," the second Spaniard's girlfriend muttered, and walked out. The men started pulling again,



staggering around the room like a ten-legged animal while the bartender slowly moved out from behind the bar with a bottle gripped in one hand. The men crashed into a table and then into the crowd and Claudio yelled, "Para! Para! Para!"

because the helmet had started to rip along its plastic seam. The men were about to destroy the very thing they wanted, and every one waited to see what they would do.

"Se esta rompiendo," Claudio said quietly. The first Moroccan nodded but did not offer to let go. No one did. Claudio looked around until he found my face in the crowd and motioned me over. I worked my way to where he stood and asked him what he wanted. "Will you hold this helmet as I would?" he asked. "Yes," I said. "Will you defend it as if it were your own?" I nodded. Claudio placed my hand on the rim and then went over to the bartender, who was still standing there with the bottle. "What is the mark?" he asked. "ABSOLUT," the bartender said. "Is that a good one?" "Very good." Claudio lifted the bottle out of the bartender's hand and shouldered his way back through the crowd. The Moroccan looked on suspiciously. Claudio twisted the top open and upended the bottle until the helmet was full. "DEJENLO" Claudio said, holding the helmet from underneath. The rest of us let go and Claudio presented the helmet to the Moroccan, who brought the rim to his mouth and took a respectful swallow. He passed it to his left and the next Moroccan drank and then the other Spaniard drank and finally the last Moroccan took his turn. He gave the helmet to Claudio, who received it like a chalice and knocked a sip back from the rim.

From there the helmet went to the bartender, who took a swallow and sent it off around the room. "ATTORA?" he said loudly. Claudio gestured at the Moroccans and then slapped his wallet down on the bar. "These men are now my friends," he said. "They are not to pay for another thing."

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30 Days in the Lif[illegible] the Culture

April 2001



Forever Young

[illegible]elta Young, photographed by John Rawlings for the [illegible]nuary 1941 issue of *Vogue*. [illegible] *John Rawlings: 30 Years in [illegible]ogue*, out this month from [illegible] Editions; a major retrospective [illegible] Rawlings's work will open [illegible] New York's Fashion Institute [illegible] of Technology in June.


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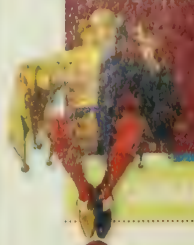
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April

MARK TWAIN ON THE GREAT WHITE WAY, ELTON JOHN INVADES PARIS, AND CHEERLEADERS TAKE DAYTONA BEACH



MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Labor of love: The Fenimore Art Museum in Cooperstown, New York, pays tribute to one of America's great artistic chroniclers of the labor movement with "Ralph Fasanella's America."	**3** French connection: The City of Lights plays host to Elton John as he performs at the Palais Omnisport de Paris Bercy.	**4** Hoping to ride the country's skyrocketing interest in cheerleading, the national college cheerleading championships take place this weekend in Daytona Beach, Florida.	**5** MoMA displays special editions of the Swiss art magazine *Parkett*, which was founded in the early 80s.	**6** The Aurora Theatre Company presents Jon Robin Baitz's adaptation of *Hedda Gabler*, Henrik Ibsen's 1890 masterpiece about sex and power, at the Berkeley City Club in Berkeley, California.	**7** Southern wom… will come and go, talking of Michelangelo, Atlanta's High Museum of Art opens "Pai… from the Age … Michelangelo … Kress Collecti…
8 Soprano Renée Fleming and pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet join the San Francisco Symphony in treating the Bay Area to a night of Debussy and Rachmaninoff.	**10** *The It Girl*, a play based on the 1927 silent movie that made Clara Bow a star and began the "It" phenomenon about 70 years pre-Gwyneth, premieres at the York Theatre Company in New York.	**11** The Art Institute of Chicago presents an exhibition of the work of the Dutch photographer Rineke Dijkstra.	**12** "Italian Art Facing Modernity, 1880–1910," an exploration of painting and sculpture at the turn of the last century, opened this week at Paris's Musée d'Orsay and runs through July 16.	**13** The L.A. Philharmonic marks the 250th anniversary of Bach's death with two nights at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion dedicated to the composer.	
15 *Viva la Revolución!* The Los Angeles County Museum of Art presents "Shifting Tides: Cuban Photography After the Revolution."	**16** The monthlong World Series of Poker kicks off at Binion's Horseshoe in Las Vegas as card sharks from around the world vie for the $1.5 million pot and look to join former champions such as Puggy Pearson, Stu Ungar, and Sailor Roberts on the Wall of Fame.	**18** In what is sure to be a boon to the New Jersey art scene, the Newark Museum presents "Santos: Sculpture Between Heaven and Earth," an exhibition of small, wooden religious figures.	**19** New York's Bonni Benrubi Gallery opens "The Greek File: Images from a Mythic Land," a collection of William Abranowicz's photographs of Greece.	**20** The retiring maestro of the Los Angeles Master Chorale, Paul Salamunovich, is honored with a concluding performance at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion.	**21** London tourists need not … alarmed by th… gunfire coming … the Tower of Lo… It's merely the 62-gun salute f… Queen Elizabeth … 75th birthday.
22 Opening night for *The Drawer Boy*, a play about a young actor who visits two aging farmer friends as research for a new play, at Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre Company.	**23** New York hosts "France Moves," a three-week festival of French contemporary dance featuring 10 dance troupes, with premieres by Maguy Marin, Philippe Decouflé, Dominique Boivin, and other French dance luminaries we've never heard of.	**24** String Fling: The Chicago Symphony Orchestra and conductor Daniel Barenboim perform Verdi's *Requiem*.	**25** The Boston Museum of Fine Arts turns its eyes east with "Japan at the Dawn of the Modern Age: Meiji Prints," an exhibition of more than 600 Japanese color woodblock prints produced during the 1868–1912 reign of Emperor Mutsuhito.	**26** A new musical based on Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* premieres at the Minskoff Theatre. Includes music by Don Schlitz, who, for those not in the know, wrote "The Gambler" for Kenny Rogers.	**27** The Louvre opens two exhibitions: "Les Gemmes de Louis XIV" (The Jewels of the Sun King) and "L'Étrange et le Merveilleux en Terre d'Islam" (The Strange and the Marvelous in the Land of Islam).	**28** "Mondrian: The Transatlantic Paintings," whi… opens today at … Harvard Unive… Busch-Reisinge… Museum, focuse… a series of 17 w… started by Mon… in Europe and fi… in America duri… the artist's final …
29 Roaring 20s Paris comes to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art as "L'Esprit Nouveau: Purism in Paris, 1918–1925" opens today.	**30** American Ballet Theatre opens its spring season with a gala at the Metropolitan Opera in New York.				



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HOT REELS

FACTORY GIRL
Brigid Berlin (top right) with her siblings and parents, Richard and Honey, Christmas 1952.

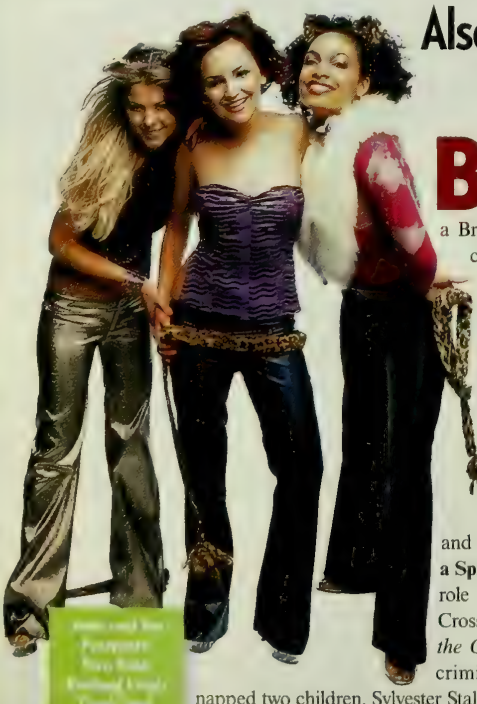
A Brigid Too Far

BRIGID BERLIN RETURNS TO THE SCREEN

Pie in the Sky: The Brigid Berlin Story is a documentary about the ultimate dysfunctional American family. Daddy, Hearst Corporation president **Richard Berlin,** counted **Dick Nixon, Joe McCarthy,** and **J. Edgar Hoover** among his cronies. Mother, a bone-thin perfectionist named **Honey,** gave lunches for the **Duchess of Windsor.** They lived in a Fifth Avenue maisonette with Irish maids and German nannies. The four children had everything, but still turned out wrong—**Brigid** most spectacularly so. A chubby child, she was put on diet pills and by her mid-20s was a full-fledged amphetamine addict who had already gone through her first trust fund and divorced her first and only husband, a gay window dresser. What else was left but **Andy Warhol** superstardom? The scene from Warhol's *The Chelsea Girls,* of Brigid shooting up through the seat of her jeans, is as shocking and hilarious here as when it was filmed in 1967.

As directed by **Vincent Fremont,** a longtime Warhol collaborator, and his wife, **Shelly Dunn Fremont,** *Pie in the Sky* is an extraordinary collage of the Berlin family's home movies, Brigid's tape-recorded fights over the telephone with her mother, film and video footage from the Factory in the 60s, 70s, and 80s, and interviews with friends such as **Patty Hearst, John Waters, Larry Rivers** and me. It is also a painful portrait of obsession, addiction, and loneliness. Although Berlin has put speed and booze behind her, she still has a hard time resisting a Key-lime pie—hence the title. The most moving passages are of Berlin herself, a born actress, smartly dressed to shop for vegetables at the Union Square Greenmarket, dipping her breasts into poster paint and then pressing them on paper to make her signature "Tit Prints," lighting up a Marlboro upon learning that her annual chest X-ray is clear and saying to the camera, "This is the only cigarette I really enjoy for the entire year." **(Rating: ★★★½)**

—BOB COLACELLO



Also This Month ...

FROM RACING CARS TO ROCKING CATS

Based on the best-selling novel by Helen Fielding, **Bridget Jones's Diary** features Renée Zellweger as a British single woman who vows to change her ways and land the man of her dreams. Hugh Grant and Colin Firth play the objects of her wayward affection. Tapping into the treasure trove that is Archie Comics, **Josie and the Pussycats** is a live-action version of the cartoon about a cat-suit-clad girl band who solve mysteries in their spare time, starring Rachael Leigh Cook, Tara Reid, and Rosario Dawson. In **Along Came a Spider,** Morgan Freeman reprises the role of forensic psychologist Dr. Alex Cross (previously seen in 1997's *Kiss the Girls*), this time on the trail of a criminal mastermind who has kidnapped two children. Sylvester Stallone takes a high-octane turn with **Driven,** as a retired auto-racing champion enlisted to help a young driver who has lost his edge. Also, in what may be an attempt to relive his *Stroker Ace* days, Burt Reynolds plays a retired auto-racer. Ted Demme's **Blow** is the semi-biographical story of George Jung, one of the country's first major cocaine suppliers, played by an oddly coiffed Johnny Depp.

—JOHN GILLIES



VEIL OF TEAR
The Circle's Maryi
Parvin Almani
Nargess Mamizad

Bowing East

JAFAR PANAHI'S *THE CIRCLE*

Following various characters as their lives intersect over the course of a day and night, *The Circle* has some resemblance to *American Graffiti,* with a few more questions instead of being set in Modesto, 1962, it is set in present-day Iran; its characters, rather than cruising after one last night of innocent kicks, are doing their best to avoid being sent to prison; and, truth be told, it's not all that fun. But wait—keep reading! It's a powerful, moving, even perverse, entertaining film, and there's nothing else quite like it. The director is **Jafar Panahi,** whose last film was *The Wave Maker* (1995). Panahi's storytelling can be quite [illegible] here, and will feel even more elliptical to Western audiences unfamiliar with the culture. But, for those of us not worried, say, about getting arrested for sharing a car with a man who is not our husband, *The Circle* is as bracing and disorienting as the best science fiction: a cold plunge into authentic dislocation.

(Rating: ★★★½)

—BRUCE HANDY


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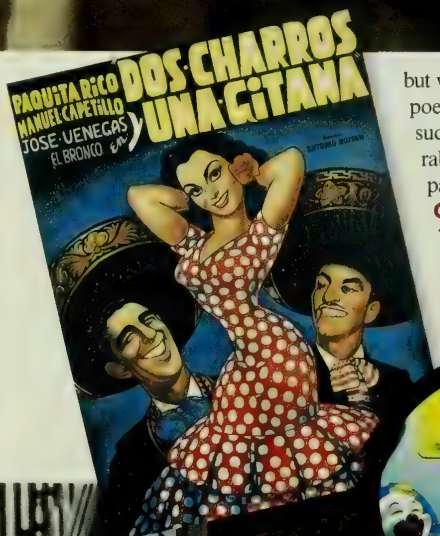
HOT TYPE

ELISSA SCHAPPELL

Roll over, Lassie, and tell Toto the news. **Stephen M. Silverman,** with his canine confidante, Coco, unleashes the s crets of Doggiewood stars in *Movie Mutts* (Abrams). The mela choly Buster Keaton was the elegant "stone face" king of th silent screen; his wife, **Eleanor Keaton,** and writer **Jeffrey Vanc** team up for *Buster Keaton Remembered* (Abrams). In *Searchin for John Ford* (St. Martin's), **Joseph McBride** tracks the crue bullying bastard who was one of the greatest filmmakers of a time, creator of such American classics as *The Grapes of Wra* and *The Searchers*. **Rogelio Agrasánchez Jr.'s** *Cine Mexican* (Chronicle) celebrates the golden age of Mexican movie poste from 1936 to 1956, when Art Deco style sambaed with pulp se sationalism. Almodóvar, Levinson, and Stone are among 20 d rectors **Stephen Lowenstein** probes about their virgin voyage into film in *My First Movie* (Pantheon). The mother-daught bond goes commercial in **Joyce Ostin's** pretty brag book, *Holl wood Moms* (Abrams), with an intro by Debbie Reynolds's li pumpkin, **Carrie Fisher.** Aww…

Also this month: Honk, honk, Popemobile! Former U.S. amba sador to the Vatican **Raymond Flynn** and author **Robin Moore** e alt the controversial holy man in their personal portrait, *John Paul* (St. Martin's). **Aaron Latham** conjures the myth of King Arthur but with cowboys, chewing tobacco, and a big ax—in *Code of the West* (Simon & Schuster). Critic an poet **James Fenton** stuffs *The Strength of Poetry: Oxford Lectures* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux) wit such laudables as W. H. Auden's take on Shakespeare's homoeroticism and Marianne Moore rabble-rousing for women's rights. *Form and Fashion* (Arena) presents **Sheila Metzner's** etherea painterly fashion shots with text by **Ralph Lauren** and **M. Raven Metzner.** *Surfer* editor **Sa George's** *The Perfect Day* (Chronicle) covers more than 40 awesome years of cutting-edge surfing The incomparable **Ruth Reichl,** *Gourmet* editor in chief, recalls her conversion from chef to foo writer, palpating tomatoes with Wolfgang Puck, and gorging on garlic with Alice Waters in he memoir *Comfort Me with Apples* (Random House). Photographer **Jeff Brouws** captures the tw light world of the carnival midway in *Inside the Live Reptile Tent* (Chronicle). The Talking Head start making sense in **David Bowman's** *This Must Be the Place* (Harper Entertainment), the lowdown on how art-school chums Tina Weymouth an David Byrne's feuding ripped apart the cool-nerd rockers. Imagine Erm Bombeck and Nora Ephron hammered on Jack Daniel's, dishing e husbands and their trophy trollops, and you've got **Karen Karbo'** *Generation Ex* (Bloomsbury). No-talent girl pop stars solv a murder mystery in **Jaime Clarke's** satirical debut nove *We're So Famous* (Bloomsbury). **James Thurber's** *The Dog Department* (HarperCollins) unleashes a pack of the cantankerous he-man cat-hater's cartoons. It's a dog-eat-dog world. Woof, woof!









Clockwise from bottom right: Matt Dillon holding Puffy in *There's Something About Mary*; Buster Keaton in *The Electric House*, 1922; carnival clowns photographed by Jeff Brouws for *Inside the Live Reptile Tent*; a promotional poster for *Two Charros and a Gypsy Girl*, 1956; German "Arica," 1999, by Sheila Metzner.


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L.A. Modern

A VIEW OF THE ART WORLD FROM BEVERLY HILLS



FACE-TO-FACE
Alan Hergott and Curt Shepard, sitting in front of *Hill*, 1985, by Gilbert & George, at their home in Beverly Hills.

"Everyone thinks collecting is autobiographical, which it is to a great extent. The collection forms a narrative. If you're reading it the way it's intended, you're learning something very personal about us," says **Alan Hergott,** one of L.A.'s leading entertainment lawyers, a partner at Bloom, Hergott, Diemer and Cook. In 1996, Hergott and his companion, writer **Curt Shepard,** commissioned L.A. architect **Michael Maltzan** to design a house. "We gave Michael a list of things we wanted the house to do.... We said he should think about **Sol LeWitt, Donald Judd,** and **Carl Andre.**" Featured in the 1999 exhibition "The Un-Private House" at New York's MoMA, the space is perfect for displaying their expanding art collection. Among the upcoming exhibitions Hergott is looking forward to are "Public Offerings" at L.A.'s Geffen Contemporary, featuring the breakthrough works of the current generation of young artists; "BitStreams," a digital-technology show at New York's Whitney Museum; and **Bruce Nauman's** work from the 1980s at New York's Zwirner & Wirth gallery. "Nauman not only speaks to all my concerns as a collector, he seems to be able to hit every important conceptual, artistic, formal, forward-thinking mark along the way—his influence is overwhelming." Two Los Angeles architecture projects have also caught Hergott's eye: **Frank Gehry's** Walt Disney Concert Hall and **José Rafael Moneo's** cathedral, Our Lady of the Angels. What else is Hergott excited about? Discovering the unknown. "What I'm most looking forward to seeing is something I haven't seen before by an artist I've never heard of."

—A. M. HOMES



WORLD BEAT

Aqua Dining (Paul Street at Northcliff) is built over one of **Sydney's** oldest swimming pools....

Scoogi (160 Sol Sri Bumphen), one of **Bangkok's** best new restaurants, is housed in a condominium ...

and Zamas (Km. 5 Carretera Boca Paila), the place to eat in **Tulum** (on the Yucatán Peninsula), is solar-powered.





TINY TIMBER
***Clockwise from above:* Oliver Boberg in front of one of his construction sites; *Aussichtsplattform*, 1999; *Wenderplatz*, 2000; Boberg at work in his studio.**

Art of Deception

OLIVER BOBERG'S GRAND DESIGNS ON MINIATURE LANDSCAPES

Oliver Boberg is standing outside, somewhere in Germany, somewhere between Fürth, where he lives, and Coburg, where he works as a schoolteacher. We are talking on cell phones; if he moves two feet in either direction, he disappears. At 35, Boberg is turning photography on its head. His carefully constructed images of urban industrial areas, underpasses, banal buildings, and gray skies echo the formal and dispassionate documentation of previous generations—**Bernd** and **Hilla Becher** in particular—and yet in Boberg's world nothing is real; everything is a meticulously wrought model. Trained as a painter at Nuremberg's Academy of Fine Arts, Boberg straddles the line between fiction and nonfiction. "I try to build set decorations for a film which is inside the people," says Boberg. It is the familiar, ethereal, lingering sensation of place that captures the artist's imagination. It is also about Germany, identity and memory, fixity and mutability.

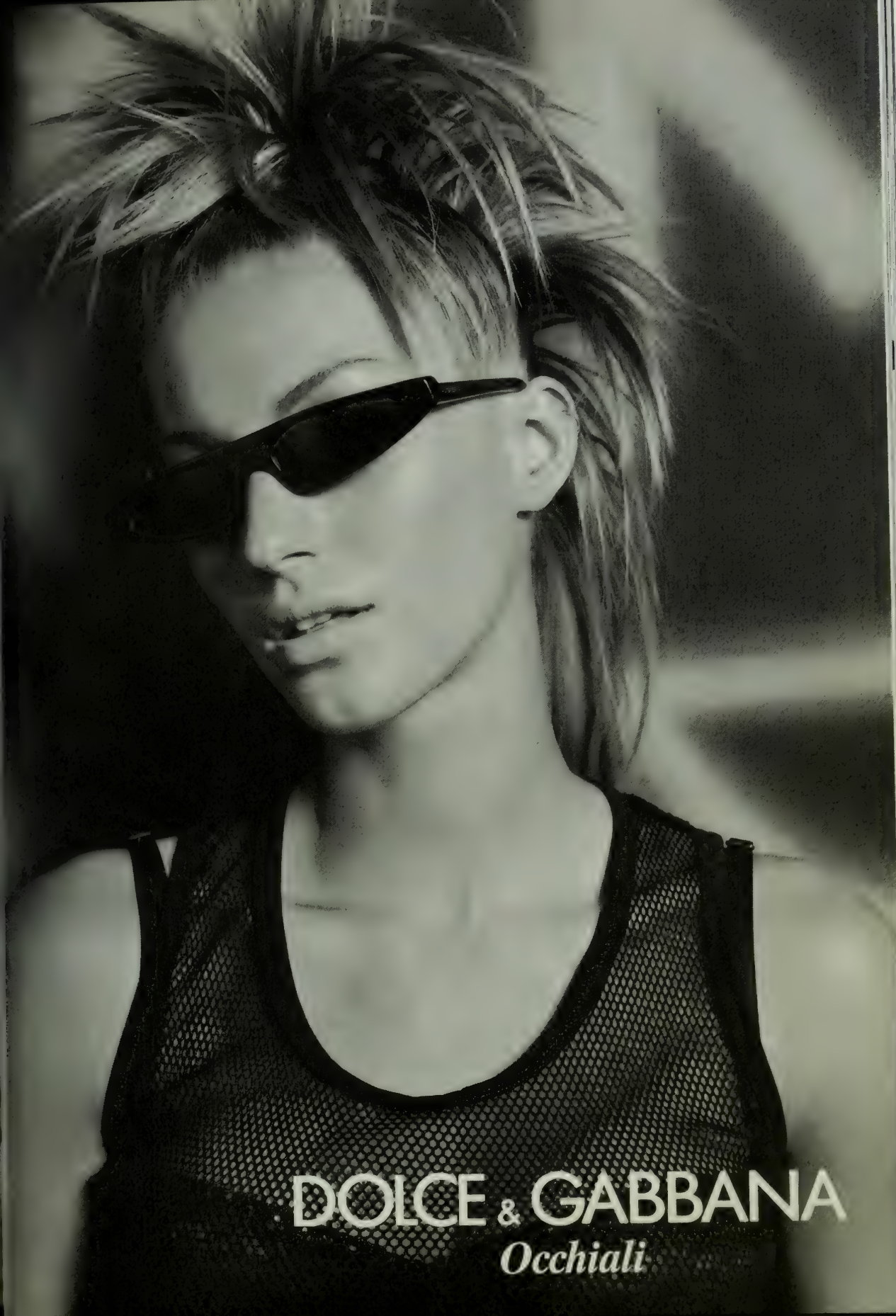
This spring an exhibition of Boberg's work opens at New York's Paul Morris Gallery. His latest images are of clouds, made using cotton arranged on sheets of Plexiglas and photographed from below. "There's a direct comment on the death of grand dreams in Germany, and there's also a strong interest in the beauty of banality, the ability to create your own world, a world where you control everything, and instead of making it into an ideal, you make it into something that is commonplace," says San Francisco MoMA curator **Aaron Betsky.** "He's making us aware of the artificiality of the world we've made for ourselves."

"Where does my memory come from?" Boberg asks. "Where do I know these things from?"

—A.M.H.






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BUS BOYS Clockwise from top: Julien Nitzberg and Señor Amor at the Elfstone Hollow; the bar at the Trails; the bartender at the Embers; the Magic Lamp Inn.

'S The Hip Parade

COCKTAIL NATION GOES ON TOUR

Saying we were a theater group was the easiest way to expla what we were doing there," says **Joe Sehee,** the **Marlon Perkins** L.A.'s strangest wildlife expeditions: bus tours into the uncharted outback suburban cocktail lounges. Several times a year, 50 young, sharkskin-clo cocktailistas climb aboard tour buses bound for Greater Los Angeles forgotten land of red Naugahyde, lounge singers, and smoky dr wood elegance. Scouted by Sehee and his cohorts (including **Señ Amor,** the co-host of KXLU's *Molotov Cocktail Hour,* and **Julie Nitzberg,** who have inherited the role of troop leaders), the stops a typical tour might include El Encanto, a remote dinner lounge in th middle of the San Gabriel National Forest (at least a one-hour dri from Hollywood); the Derby, a horse-race-themed restaurant ne the Santa Anita racetrack; buffet dinner in a faux German village Huntington Beach; fondue and polka at Matterhorn Chef in Valle Glen; and drinks at Elfstone Hollow, a pub in Huntington Bea devoted to *The Hobbit* and "Renaissance community." As impo tant as the destinations, however, is the en route bonding, whe a bacchanalian atmosphere of musical bus seats and stand-u karaoke prevails. Sehee started the bus tours 10 years ago ar accidentally spawned a powerful youth movement (sometim called Cocktail Nation and referenced famously in the Dresde Room scene in *Swingers*). As sleepy bedroom communities are overr by busloads of thrill-seeking thirtysomethings, Sehee celebrates the trend of "inte generational mingling. It's still great to see kids from Hollywood having fun with o people in the suburbs and appreciating their culture." —RICHARD RUSHFIEL

Postcard from L.A.

STREET CHIC AND MINI-MALL SUSHI FLOURISH IN THE CITY OF ANGELS THIS SPRING . . .

Ever since **Ita-Cho** (7311 Beverly Blvd.) moved into its new, more fabulous digs on Beverly, those craving Japanese in a West Hollywood mini-mall have been heading to **Hirozen** (8385 Beverly Blvd.).... Westside ladies, leading ladies, and other knitting fanatics are lining up around the block to get into **Jennifer Knits** (108 Barrington Walk) in Brentwood.... L.A. gentrification keeps expanding eastward: **Mt. Washington** is the latest outpost of cool.... They're still packing them in at **Las Palmas Supper Club** (714 N. Las Palmas Blvd.)—maybe to see the big jellyfish tank?—and at the Tuesday-night party "Beige" at **360** (6290 Sunset Blvd.).... The hipster men's clothing store **K Bond** (7257 Beverly Blvd.) will soon open a women's store nearby.... Don't miss the band **Naked Trucker** performing at **Largo** (432 N. Fairfax Ave.).... Stylist **Magda Berliner** is selling her line of clothing at **Aero & Co.** (4651 Kingswell Ave.).... A restaurant renaissance is sweeping Venice, including newcomers **Axe** (1009 Abbot Kinney Blvd.) and **Lilly's** (1031 Abbot Kinney Blvd.).... Greg Dulli (of the Afghan Whigs) and friends have bought the **Short Stop** (1455 Sunset Blvd.), a former cop bar in Echo Park.... And get your morning-after eggs and coffee at **Eatz** at the **Los Feliz Municipal Golf Course** (3207 Los Feliz Blvd.).







PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK LIPSON


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MILAN LONDON TOKYO

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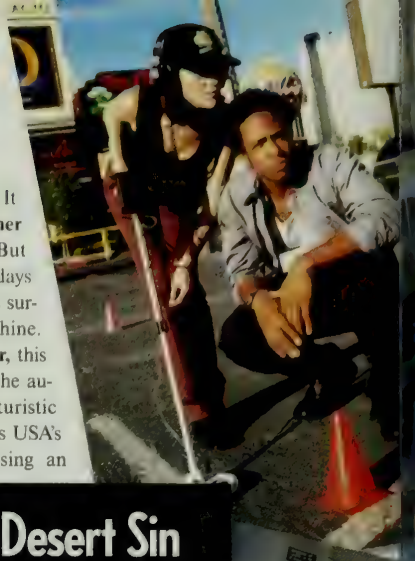
TV Funhouse (Comedy Central): Robert Smigel—creator of Triumph the Insult Comic Dog and Saturday Night Live's cartoon shorts ("Fun with Real Audio," "The Ambiguously Gay Duo," and "The X Presidents")—presents this twisted variety program disguised as a kids' show. Includes touching vignettes involving smut-mouthed puppets who venture to Atlantic City and Tijuana and usually end up at cockfights or arguing over live-action poodle hookers (★★★★).

Bands on the Run (VH1): Four unsigned rock bands crisscross the country and go head-to-head with competing gigs, vying for a grand-prize A&R showcase. Producers are going for Real World/Survivor-esque drama, but there is a bonus diva quotient due to the fact they are all "artists" (★★★).

MTV Cribs (MTV): Guided tours of the homes of rock stars including Tommy Lee, Ozzy Osbourne, Moby, Gavin Rossdale, Snoop Dogg, Destiny's Child, and Backstreet Boy AJ. Prepare to marvel at how many have "pillow rooms" (★★★).



Top to bottom: the Jack Daniels Band on the epic TV fantasia Surf Dogg with his Acapulco; Moby at his crib.



Desert Sin

CSI ISN'T YOUR FATHER'S *MURDER, SHE WROTE*

A hip show on CBS? It sounds like a freak sighting: **Dan Rather** suddenly going mack daddy on us. But *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation* (Thursdays after *Survivor II*) is not only the season's surprise hit, it purrs like a beautiful machine. Produced in part by **Jerry Bruckheimer,** this techno-gizmo forensics drama dazzles the audience with science, engaging the futuristic present without spraying it toxic gray (as USA's *La Femme Nikita* does), and professing an allegiance to reason, objectivity, and lab testing that seems almost heretical in an era of fuzzy postmodernism. Reality is the ultimate play zone on this show, each cordoned-off area presenting a three-dimensional jigsaw puzzle for the viewers and the characters to solve, a collision site of *Rashomon* scenarios, cross trajectories, and microscopic remains. Starring **William Petersen,** *CSI* bears a subtle pop-myth link to **Michael Mann's** legendary cult film, *Manhunter* (just released on DVD), in which Petersen played a profiler trying to nab a serial killer by entering his cracked psyche. Here, his Gil Grissom works from the outside, the show paced to the tricky hop of his thought processes. Deploying different levels of silence and attention, he's paternal, teacherly, but slightly unreadable—tinted glass. Although *CSI* strobes with the macho flash of a Bruckheimer production, Grissom's tactful authority and emphasis o teamwork defuse its macho bluster, which may be why it's a hit with women. Another r son: a strong female cast led by **Marg Helgenberger** (*China Beach*), **Jorja Fox,** and occasio al guest star **Pamela Gidley** as facial reconstructor Terry Miller.

CSI is set in Las Vegas, a locale providing a scenic array of death drops (mountai desert, man-made lakes) and a constant influx of tourists and transients to replenish t weirdo supply. "I have a theory," Petersen told me, "that people come to Las Vegas to v their dark side, to play dirty." But the dark side can't prevail against the advance of Americ know-how. Visiting the set one day was a real-life C.S.I. from Los Angeles who's pioneered fingerprint technique for lifting prints off dead bodies. It doesn't get much neater than th Creator **Anthony Zuiker,** a longtime Vegas resident and a former tram operator at the Mira hotel, promises "kick-ass episodes" the rest of the season as *CSI* continues to ride its learni curve like the wild surf. **(Rating: ★★★★)**

—JAMES WOLCO



SITE SCENE
Top to bottom: *CSI*'s Jorja Fox and Gary Dourdan; George Eads and Fox; William Petersen as detective Gil Grissom, Paul Guilfoyle, and Catherine Willows.

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Wyborowa Vodka	Poland
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Skyy Vodka	USA
Original Polish Vodka	Poland
Tillamore Special	USA
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Luksusowa Potato Vodka	Poland
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JAMES WOLCOTT

ORIGINAL SIN

For four brief years, until Hollywood was throttled by the censors of the 1934 Production Code, movies told fast-paced, no-holds-barred truths. Many of the sex-and-sin-drenched classics of that gritty Depression-era spree have been exhumed—making today's studio releases seem flabby and tame



MADE TO M Maurice Chev Jeanette Mac measurements a scene from *L Me Tonight.*

What bubbles up from the past can be more inspiring and provoking—more revelatory—than the latest splash. Splashes subside; a raised Atlantis alters the landscape, heaving forgotten monuments and hidden spires into view—a phantom metropolis. The glory of movies is that their phantoms can be resurrected to walk and talk again. The last 10 years have seen an upsurge of interest, scholarship, and restoration efforts in the films of "pre-Code Hollywood," a term covering the frisky period in the early 30s when talking pictures found their legs and spoke their piece, often with a wad of gum in their mouths. From 1930, when studios curtailed production of silent films, conceding defeat after the success of Al Jolson's breakthrough talkie, *The Jazz Singer* (1927), to 1934, when the Production Code—governing the depiction of sex, drugs, violence, and religion—began to be stiflingly enforced, the movies swung with a candor, insouciance, and pagan nudity not heard or seen again until the 60s got freaky. Prostitution, homosexuality, crooked politics, corrupt business, homegrown Fascism, child exploitation, ethnic strife, miscegenation—no topic was taboo, and many were spiked with a wisecracking humor that knocked the starch out of any editorializing. A thin crust separates posh indulgence and ragged poverty in these Depression-era films, where the stock-market crash of 1929 dogs the characters like a dark night of the soul infecting the daylight. The very gait of the actors indicates no time to spare. Everyone's survival instincts have kicked in, keeping the films' hustlers and daisy-faced dreamers on the nervous g If you linger, you lose. If you stop, y might starve.

Pre-Code films connect with mode sensibilities because their expedience a strict economy fit the attention spans Web surfers and channel clickers. Ma of them clocking in at barely over a hour, these movies dash through the story lines and telegraph their messag with a no-fat delivery that makes mo of today's stuff seem bloated with narr tive padding, overcalculated nuances, a fresh shipments of psychological baggag the actors moving like slow mops. Pr Code films are a reminder of what movie

ery. Seduction. Twenty-Eight Private Cabanas.

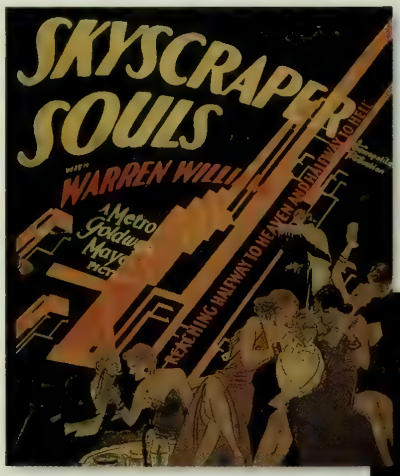


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URBAN GRIT Edward G. Robinson holds forth in *Little Caesar*; inset, in *Red Dust*, Jean Harlow gazes at Clark Gable as he types; bottom, a poster for *Skyscraper Souls*.





In the depths of the Depression, the skyscraper became a symbol of capitalism's overreaching, its hubris.

were before they got overly impressed with themselves and became trophy shelves for their production values and case studies for their stars. They also connect on a deeper level. Although pre-Code films are fascinating time capsules (I love the design elements: the gleaming black telephones, radios, and cars, the trim typography, the banded fedoras and suits so tight the buttons look like rivets, the women's hats that crisscross the screen like jaunty little sails, the angel clouds of platinum hair), they hit home today because the economic jitters keeping their characters hopping rhyme with our current jitters after the dot-com bust and tech slump. ("Rolling blackouts" may become the ruling metaphor for the new millennium.) Like the characters in early-30s films, we've enjoyed a wild spree of sky-high prosperity, only to find ourselves facing a possible reckoning. Their protagonists not only stared into the pit, but were forced to make the descent. Pre-Code films dip their stars half in shadow, half in the beckoning light.

At 11:30 on the morning of 1 May 1931 [President] Hoover pressed a button in Washington and switched on the lights of a more obvious American triumph, the Empire State Building in New York. Topped by a steel tower designed for mooring dirigibles (which were barred from the city), it was the loftiest structure on earth. New Yorkers delighted in its vital statistics: 1,250 feet high, weighing 600 million pounds, constructed with 10 million bricks, containing 67 elevators and 6,400 windows, and capable of accommodating 25,000 office workers. It had been put up in a sing year at a cost of 52 million dollars. . . . It had also cost the lives of 48 construct workers, including one who was fired and jumped off the building.

—Piers Brendon, *The Dark Valley Panorama of the 1930s* (Knop

Pre-Code movies are primarily city p tures, and the symbol of the city the skyscraper. In the Roaring Tw ties, skyscrapers were cathedrals of ca talism, steel-and-concrete temples th represented ladders of success penetr ing the clouds—monumental beanstal This phallic thrust is played for come in *Baby Face* (1933), where the harlo progress of its heroine—played by Barba Stanwyck—is charted by a panning sh of the towering office buildi where she sleeps her way to t top. Pimped by her father at early age, and coached by an e ucated crock who spouts Nie schean proverbs, Stanwyck's L decides to use her body to lea these deadbeats behind and fi some real sugar daddies. T promotional tag for the film w "She played the love game wi everything she had, and ma 'it' pay." Like Émile Zola's Nan the courtesan whose lower por was said to swallow entire tre suries, Stanwyck's Lily near bankrupts a major company with h sexual cunning. Phallic arrogance wi after it's been wrung dry.

In the depths of the Depression t skyscraper also became a symbol capitalism's overreaching, its hubr In one film it served as the worl tallest suicide diving platform. *Sk scraper Souls* (1932) is a classy so opera on superstilts, set in a drea palace taller than the Empire Sta Building. The battle for control of t building's ownership is a web of ad tery, betrayal, and financial skuldu gery that culminates in murder-suicid After an angry mistress, Sarah (Verr Teasdale), slays her tycoon lover (play by Warren William, pre-Code's dastard sultan of the executive suite), she decid to join him. As Thomas Doherty writ in his excellent history *Pre-Code Holl wood: Sex, Immorality, and Insurrection American Cinema 1930–1934* (Columb University Press), "In a dreamy finale, sh goes to the top of the skyscraper, her bla dress billowing, and walks off into the a In silence, without a scream, the came watches her recede in space to the stre below." This angel of death can't fly.

In pre-Code cinema, it's the penthous or the pavement, soar or splat, with n

BOSS

safety net in place to break an individual's or a family's fall. Given the absence of Social Security, unemployment insurance, food stamps, and a minimum wage, even the well-off couldn't take their status for granted. Lives could pop like balloons, as allegorically depicted in Cecil B. DeMille's disaster spectacle *Madam Satan* (1930), where a zeppelin carrying the revelers at a naughty masquerade party springs a leak, forcing the guests to parachute over Manhattan (the stock-market crash as harlequinade)—or end up in the gutter where they began, as demonstrated in the period's rise-and-fall gangster epics. One of the reasons pre-Code gangster films such as *Scarface* (1932), *Little Caesar* (1931), and *The Public Enemy* (1931) hold up smartly is that they combine stark, homemade imagery—a mummy-wrapped James Cagney teetering in the doorway at the end of *The Public Enemy* before smacking the floor like an ironing board, the inky soup of the dangerous streets in *Scarface*—with drum-tight storytelling. They don't have the self-referential mythology of the genre films that came later, since they were the original items—they supplied the references.



Where the antiheroes in crime sagas traveled a swift, brutal solo arc—from nobody to "big cheese" to Swiss cheese (it's seldom a single bullet that brings these hoods down, but a steel hailstorm)—the reversals of fortune in the socially conscious dramas reduced rich and poor alike to humble pie. Twists of fate level the playing field, erasing class distinctions down to a common nub of humanity. *Heroes for Sale* (1933), the *Born on the Fourth of July* of the Depression era, traces the postwar travails of two soldiers from the same hometown who served alongside each other in the mucky trenches of World War I. One, Roger (Gordon Westcott), is the son of a bank president; the other, Tom (Richard Barthelmess), is a teller at the same bank. In the confusion of battle, Tom's capture of a German officer is mistakenly credited to Roger, who drags the officer back to Allied lines after an exploding shell renders Tom unconscious. Awarded a medal for heroism, Roger returns home and is welcomed as the prodigal son, while Tom, mended by German medics and given morphine to relieve the agony of his shrapnel wounds, returns home unheralded, an addict unable to feed his habit. Even after he kicks, his life is a trail of tears—he's Red-baited, falsely imprisoned, hounded into penury that leads years later to the mire of a makeshift hobo camp. One of the hungry men gathered around the fire turns out to be Roger, who's now as destitute as Tom. "The stock market crashed and we crashed with it," he says of his father's bank. Having come full circle since the Great War, he and Tom once again share mud and cold, only this time as brothers, bedraggled equals in the struggle to survive. The one ray of hope piercing this miasma and keeping the film from being totally grimsville is the promise of recovery offered in President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's inaugural address, cited by Tom as proof that America ain't had the stuffing knocked out of her yet.

It will come as no surprise to 30s-film buffs that *Heroes for Sale* was a Warner Bros. production. No MGM product would have dared cough up that much black phlegm at the powers that be. Jack L. Warner, the head of Warner Bros., was a liberal Democrat, Louis B. Mayer, the head of MGM, a pious Republican, and the political differences between their studios wallpapered the screen. Warner Bros. films have the thick smudge and shock of tabloid headlines; they're brisk, slang-y, succinct, socially conscious, culturally unpretentious, ethnically diverse, and streamlined in their scenic design (lettered shadows do the work instead of opening a furniture showroom on-screen). When most MGM films of the pre-Code era it's like being back in the Victorian parlor with the grand piano and some old aunt with a doily on her head, the walls barely able to breathe under all that bric-a-brac and coffin woodwork as the actors nobly sacrifice themselves on the altar of Beautiful Diction. There are exceptions, of course: *Grand Hotel* (1932) is a gleaming cocktail-shaker set come to life, and at the other extreme lurks Tod Browning's *Freaks* (1932), a nightmarish look at the Other that sent screening audiences rac

Pre-Code gangster films were the origina items—they supplied the references.



STRANGE BEDFELLOWS In *Scarface*, Paul Muni raises his hand to Ann Dvorak. *Top*, in a scene from Cecil B. DeMille's *Madam Satan*, Kay Johnson fetches shoes for Roland Young, in bed with Lilian Roth.



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t of the theater and still retains its ock effect, its toadstoolish influence re- cted in everything from the photos of ane Arbus to the punk anthems of the mones. But in almost any contest be- een a Warner Bros. or Paramount film d an MGM, the MGM seems duller, kier, and overdone, dripping with class d sedated with morality. MGM romance a sickly-sweet category, made suffer- le only by grace notes such as Adrian's wns, or one of Clark Gable's grins. I d it difficult to sit through most of the rbo vehicles for MGM without wish- g that noble mare (Graham Greene's rd) would pick up the pace; her mys- ue has blanked and hardened into the ell of a magnificent mannequin. (As has at of Marlene Dietrich, ose performances in non- GM exotic pre-Code come- hers such as *Morocco* and *anghai Express* now seem e a series of exquisitely still photos intended for cultural-studies textbook androgyny—all pose.) ide from *Dinner at Eight* 33) and *Red Dust* (1932), an Harlow—another MGM vorite—is nearly unbear- le today in her sloppy, mpy carriage and constant eat. She's vulgar, but not a good way.



STARLETS AND HARLOTS Norma Shearer enchants Clark Gable in *A Free Soul*; below, Alice White and Warren William in a dressing-room scene from *Employees' Entrance*.



Adored by audiences, Norma Shearer was a dartboard for critics who couldn't abide her primping for approval.

The princess bride of pre-Code MGM was Norma Shearer, the wife of the boy-wonder producer Irving Thalberg. There Dietrich was often photographed the prize exhibit in an exotic spa (a sul- y oasis of feathers and palm fronds), learer was isolated in close-ups suitable r framing, her swan's neck and exquisite rofile offered up as a delicacy the entire ition could nibble. But once she had to late to other actors, she didn't know how adjust the glow. In such films as *The ivorcee* (1930), for which she won an Os- ar, and *A Free Soul* (1931), she didn't much emote as glisten. Her laughing es, valiant tears, and simpering smiles roclaim that her heroines are women ho Live for Love. Adored by audiences, learer was a dartboard for critics who ouldn't abide her pleased-with-herself anner and primping for approval. (By ie time she starred in *The Women* in 939, some of them had had it. "Whether ou go or not depends on whether you an stand Miss Shearer with tears flooding eadily in two directions at once," wrote tis Ferguson in *The New Republic*.) In re- ent years, however, there has been a lot f heavy lifting devoted to an upward revi- on of her reputation. Working hard to re- store Shearer's original luster is Mick LaSalle in *Complicated Women: Sex and Power in Pre-Code Hollywood* (St. Martin's), who, after acknowledging the nay-chorus's domination of the critical de- bate—"In the film book mythology that emerged, Shearer became the queenly, no-talent, cross-eyed actress.... Anybody who wanted to say something nice about Shearer had to apologize first"—dubs her a "genuine pioneer." LaSalle quotes film historian James Card, who hails her "gen- uine interpretive flexibility" (her what?), and calls for a popular revival: "Shearer still needs to be rediscovered by the pub- lic, in the same way that Buster Keaton and Louise Brooks, once forgotten, became twentieth-century icons."

Sympathetic as I am to underdogs, lost causes, and rainy walks on the beach, I regret to report that the Shearer diehards are worshiping the wrong goddess. After watching a succession of Shearer's avail- able pre-Code films, I'm afraid she's every bit the sugary dewdrop her detractors claim, a cameo brooch of an actress who's never going to seem contemporary despite the earnest efforts of her advocates to play up her racier films and rebrand her as a pioneer of do-me feminism. Far better candidates for enthusiastic second looks and serious rethinks are: Loretta Young, an ethereal yet embraceable ingenue whose later image as the gowned hostess of TV's *Loretta Young Show* and paragon of pro- priety is belied by her roles as a moll in *Midnight Mary* (1933), an escort in *Born to Be Bad* (1934), and a cut-throat busi- ness executive's cutie pie in *Employees' Entrance* (1933); Jeanette MacDonald, who, before she became the yodeling partner of Nelson Eddy in a kitsch-classic series of musicals, was yummy pastry in operet- tas and risqué comedies such as *Monte Carlo* (1930), *One Hour with You* (1932), *Love Me Tonight* (1932), and *The Merry Widow* (1934); Ruth Chatterton, who, as the boss lady in *Female* (1933), has her own private stud service and a love nest equipped with a buzzer system so that her staff will know which room requires cock- tails; and the sensational Ann Dvorak, vibrating like a struck tuning fork as the high-strung thrill seeker in *Three on a Match* (1932) and *Scarface* (where, the critic Manny Farber wrote, her "herky-jerky cat's meow stuff" and "aura of silly reck-

[illegible] smacked of *Tender Is the Night*). Sodality embodies the raw appetite and exposed wiring of women who've gone without and now can't get enough better than Dvorak. Unfortunately, she didn't have the starring roles to put her at the peak of pre-Code.

Barbara Stanwyck did. Although Stanwyck's name and face haven't undergone the dimming-out of her contemporaries', even those familiar with her black-widow spider in *Double Indemnity* (1944), leggy fleece artist in *The Lady Eve* (1941), bedridden target of terror in *Sorry, Wrong Number* (1948), and cattle baroness in TV's *Big Valley* (where the true big valley was Linda Evans's cleavage) know only half the story. The reissue of Stanwyck's more obscure films on video both restores her to earth and raises her to a higher pedestal. She emerges, I think, as the greatest actress of 30s film, its most incorruptible spirit and natural wonder. An actress who never reached for a false note or developed a litter of old reliables (unlike Joan Crawford, who in film after film kept gnawing on that same knuckle), Stanwyck seems almost indifferent to the luminosity of her eggshell skin, disdainful of her sexual command over dithering men as she dodges their inept lunges. Her pre-Code films are condensed pulp novels, sagas of self-preservation that shoot from naturalism to melodrama with a single glance or fallen lock of hair. Even at their most overwrought, Stanwyck refuses to let her good-bad girls writhe on a bed of nails. She hasn't a speck of vanity or its inverse, showy masochism. Her sanity is almost saintly in its transparent purity. Her seen-it-all slouch, her righteous squalls of anger, her squint as she sizes up a fancy talker to see if he's on the level (and the contempt that suffuses her face when someone tries to muscle her), her lunar shifts from cold detachment to beaming acceptance—only the young Bette Davis, before she became too mannered, could so convincingly and transfixingly sling herself around as if obeying some inner law.

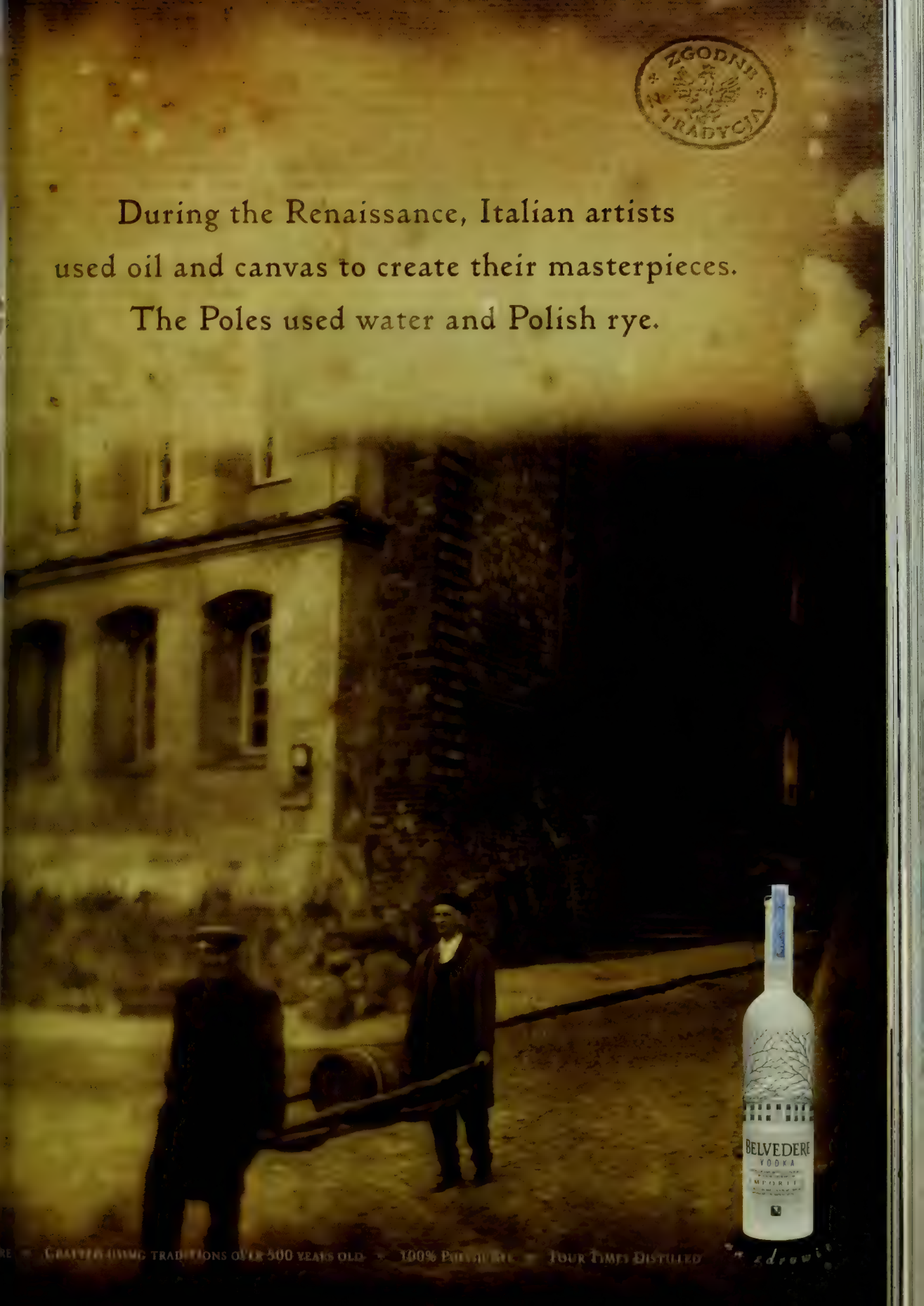
In *Night Nurse* (1931), an amazing piece of amoral payback directed by William Wellman (memo: any pre-Coder directed by Wellman is an automatic must-see), Stanwyck plays a nurse attending to the welfare of two children being starved to death for their trust-fund money by their dipso mother and the family's Snidely Whiplash chauffeur, played by Clark Gable, who, dressed in a black uniform as tight as a condom, is a fascist totem of sadomasochism. Stanwyck's transformation in *Night Nurse* from sullen duty to wrathful outrage is so primal it's thrilling, and the film's capper at the morgue is like a wicked dose of Dashiell Hammett. *Ladies They Talk About* (1933) sticks Stanwyck behind bars as a bank robber who refuses to rat out her associates. Trading in her glamorous Orry-Kelly outfits for what appear to be burlap sacks with armholes, Stanwyck's Nan is given a tour of the women's facilities at San Quentin, where she's greeted and threatened as the "new fish": "Listen, don't think you can walk in here and take over this joint. There's a lot of big sharks in here that just live on fresh fish like you," warns Susie (Dorothy Burgess), a psycho brunette, to which Nan replies, "Yeah, when they add you up, what do you spell?" (Later, a friendlier inmate cautions, "Watch out for her, she likes to wrestle," as the camera cuts to a lesbian dowager working a cigar.) The film's nicest low-key moment is a curbside chat Nan has after she's been released from prison with the detective who put her behind bars. "No hard feelings?" he asks. "No; say—you have your racket and I have mine." "Well, so long, Nan," he says, chuckling. "I'll tell the boys at headquarters that you're in circulation again, they'll be glad to know it." Pre-Code films had quiet interludes where even antagonists could exchange modest regards.

The glory of movies is that their phantoms can be resurrected to walk and talk again.

(Although it doesn't qualify as pre-Code, another nifty Barbara Stanwyck unknown can't be ignored: *Internes Can't Take Money,* made in 1937. Ignore the daffy title. Superbly directed by Alfred Santell, the medical drama that introduced Dr. Kildare to the screen unfurls an early tracking shot through a heaven-white hospital that anticipates the floating camera-eye of Orson Welles and Robert Altman and ends with a heartbreaking reunion that seems practically out of Dickens. Joel McCrea stars as the idealist with the stethoscope who helps Stanwyck find her lost child, assisted by Lloyd Nolan, giving a rousing performance as a gangster who owes the doc big-time after he patches him up without squealing to the cops. The movie's most offbeat touch: a soft-spoken villain whose constant snacking on popcorn seems like a sinister perversion.)

The urban grit of pre-Code films becat[illegible] a sty in rural eyes. Resentment began[illegible] build in Middle America against all t[illegible] free love and flying innuendo. That gra[illegible] sham Cecil B. DeMille prophesied in 19[illegible] "Producers are building their own funer[illegible] pyre by making films for the theater m[illegible] and New York." Too much sophisticati[illegible] rots the eyeballs! The main engine of t[illegible] moral re-armament was the Catho[illegible] Church, whose Legion of Decency swo[illegible] its members to abstain from attending "co[illegible] demned" films and whose hierarchy lo[illegible] bied Hollywood and Washington to we[illegible] out blasphemy and fornication and ma[illegible] the screen safe for peachy-keen enterta[illegible] ment Maw, Paw, and all the young'u[illegible] could see. The Production Code itself w[illegible] a Catholic document. As Thomas Doher[illegible] writes in *Pre-Code Hollywood,* "The Produ[illegible] tion Code, the enabling legislation for clas[illegible] cal Hollywood cinema, was written by F[illegible] ther Daniel Lord, a Jesuit priest, and Ma[illegible] tin Quigley, a prominent Roman Catho[illegible] layman and editor of the influe[illegible] tial exhibitors' journal *Motion P[illegible] ture Herald.* Their amalgam [illegible] Irish-Catholic Victorianism colo[illegible] much of the cloistered design [illegible] classical Hollywood cinema, n[illegible] just the warm-hearted padr[illegible] played by Spencer Tracy, P[illegible] O'Brien, and Bing Crosby, but t[illegible] deeper lessons of the Baltimo[illegible] catechism—deference to civil a[illegible] religious authorities ... and res[illegible] tance to the pleasures of the fle[illegible] in thought, word, and deed." the early 30s, as the movies became mo[illegible] graphic, American Catholics agitated for[illegible] clampdown, and Joseph I. Breen, anoth[illegible] Catholic, was chosen to administer the Cod[illegible] which he did for 20 years, delousing ever[illegible] thing in his path. Filmmakers had to ho[illegible] scotch to adapt, changing scripts, choppi[illegible] scenes, and making honest women out [illegible] the brazen hussies played by Harlow, Di[illegible] trich, and Mae West. (Tough-guy actors suc[illegible] as Cagney, Humphrey Bogart, and Edwa[illegible] G. Robinson were able to make the tra[illegible] sition scarcely missing a beat. As usual, [illegible] was women who incarnated temptation [illegible] the censors' minds. Male brutality got o[illegible] more lightly, as if it were just a brisk way [illegible] conducting business.)

Perhaps the greatest crime against mo[illegible] ies wasn't the mangling of films in th[illegible] pipeline and the muffling of cinemat[illegible] expression that followed, but the retroactiv[illegible] butchery that resulted in a desecration [illegible] Hollywood's legacy. As Mark Vieira e[illegible] plains in *Sin in Soft Focus: Pre-Code Ho[illegible] lywood,* "If the studios wanted to rereleas[illegible] a film, [Breen] made them cut [objectio[illegible] able] scenes—not from prints, not fro[illegible]


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...from grain positives, not from dupe negatives ...*from master 'camera' negatives.*" It was like ripping pages out of original manuscripts. Among the amputees were *All Quiet on the Western Front, Animal Crackers, Monkey Business, The Public Enemy, Frankenstein, Blonde Venus, King Kong,* and *Tarzan and His Mate.* Some of the cuts have been subsequently restored—such as the startling moment in *King Kong* where Kong sniffs his fingers after probing Fay Wray, and the nude underwater frolics from *Tarzan and His Mate* but this doesn't compensate for the scenes that can never be retrieved, or the complete films withdrawn from circulation or destroyed. Too much of Atlantis will remain forever submerged. Which is all the more reason for us to be grateful for the gems that have been preserved.

Freaks's toadstoolish influence is reflected in everything from Diane Arbus photos to the Ramones.

The most indispensable source of pre-Code material is cable's Turner Classic Movies, which shows rare beauties not available on video and hasn't succumbed to the dumbing-down that's afflicted American Movie Classics. (Mick LaSalle has a helpful list in the appendix to *Complicated Women* of titles exclusive to TCM.) But, for the culturally disadvantaged whose cable systems don't carry TCM, here's a beginner's guide to the best pre-Code discoveries, a list that excludes the widely recognized Hollywood classics made between 1930 and 1934, such as *Frankenstein, King Kong,* and *It Happened One Night* (which need no extra boost). Every one of these films is available on video and can be purchased over the Internet if your local video outlet is too overstocked with Sandra Bullock movies to carry them.

• *Baby Face* (1933). Nietzsche for nymphos, or the will to power travels on slim hips.

• *Blessed Event* (1932). Newspaper satire in the *Front Page* manner, but less enamored with itself and mouthing off in ways the movies soon wouldn't dare. The radio feud between Lee Tracy, a gossip columnist with Cagney-esque brio and elastic bend, and Dick Powell, a sappy croo who seems to be all Adam's apple, is Jo Benny–Fred Allen hilarious.

• *Bureau of Missing Persons* (1933). Li known Bette Davis film with a vigor Pat O'Brien on the case and a wonde sympathy for sad sacks who drop ou society, choosing to be among the mis rather than listen to their nagging spou

• *Employees' Entrance* (1933). The dep ment store as mercantile hub of pal intrigue; the boss as savior-tyrant exer ing his droit du seigneur over the cu behind the counter; Warren William Loretta Young, a doomed mating of slick and the dewy.

• *Ex-Lady* (1933). In this intelligent gu to making whoopee, Bette Davis, emp ered before such a word existed, play career woman who takes a Norma Sh er jaunt of civilized adultery.

• *Female* (1933). Catherine the Grea the corporate saddle, and (until the f goes soft) the amusing display of R Chatterton helping herself to the sa erotic perks as, oh, W ren William.

• *Heroes for Sale* (193 A Woody Guthrie pro tune set to celluloid, sepia-toned than *Grapes of Wrath.*

• *Night Nurse* (1931). rected by William W man as if he were driv through enemy fire, wit Clark Gable who wo never be this elementa evil again.

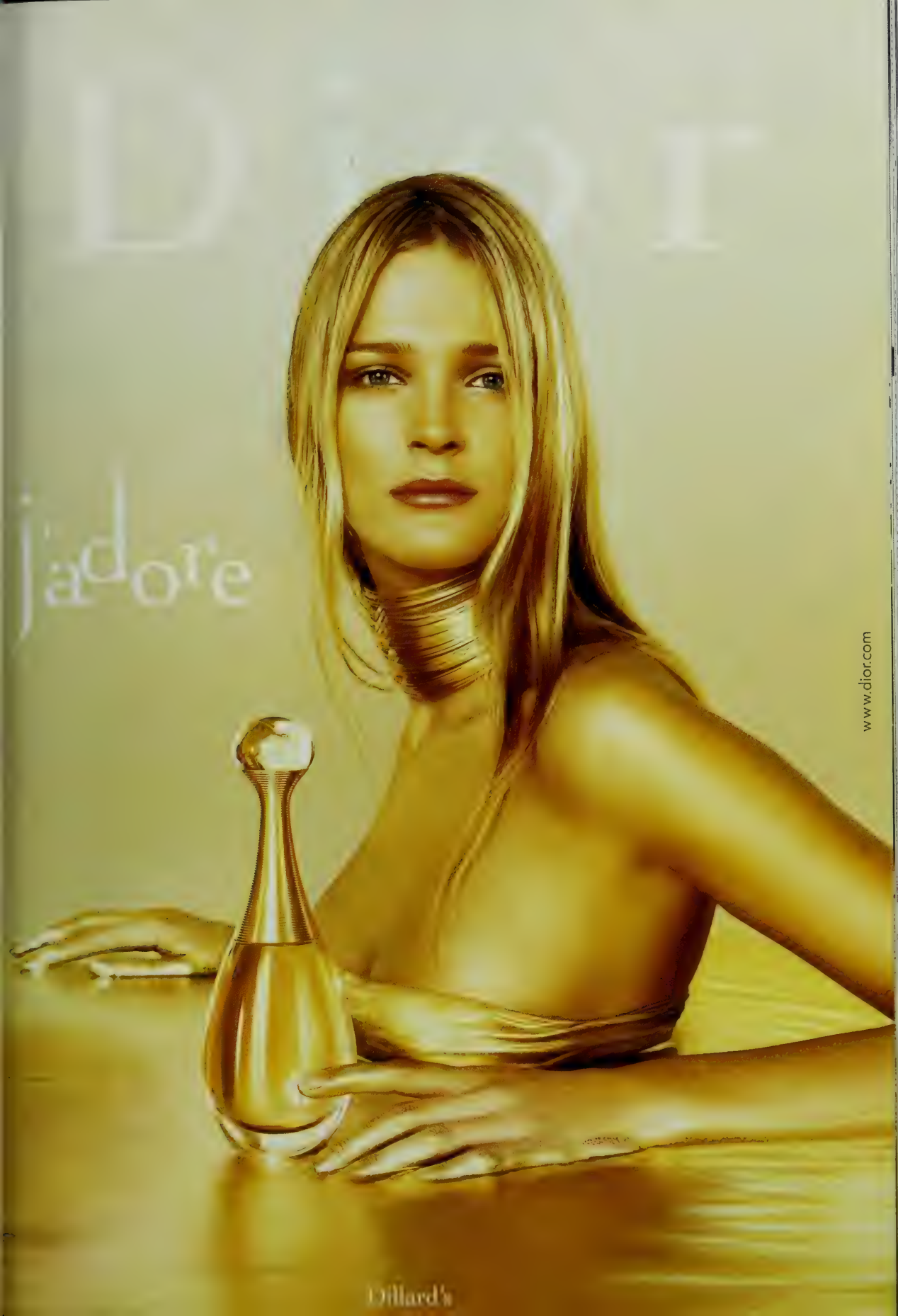
• *Skyscraper Souls* (193 Warren William back the executive chair and wolf's clothing, this time out to devo an innocent, dainty Maureen O'Sulliv and who can blame him?

• *Three on a Match* (1932). Bette Da Ann Dvorak, and Joan Blondell meet and careening in different directions l billiard balls, with Dvorak flying right the window in the film's gothic finale.



FREAK SHOW Barbara Stanwyck and a thug amid the deadbeats in *Baby Face;* inset, a party scene from Tod Browning's *Freaks.*

When you add these films up, w do they spell? Hollywood in wayward youth, when a social c science wasn't a superior attitude but underdog defiance, when a woman w the scrappy equal of any man, and wh sin still carried the tang of forbidden fr Since scores of pre-Code rarities remain the vaults awaiting possible re-release, n discoveries may be in store in the ye ahead. As the movies thus far saved fr oblivion prove, Hollywood's phosphor cent ghosts should not be kept in captiv They have a lot to tell us, and they tell it if they didn't know how to lie. □


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WHO STOLE THE OSCARS?

The theft of last year's Oscars led to the arrest of a trucker and a forklift operator. Meanwhile, Willie Fulgear, the junk scavenger who claimed he'd found the golden statuettes in a Dumpster, became a local hero, rewarded with $50,000 and a tribute at the ceremony. Case closed? Not exactly

BY MARK SEAL



BACKGROUND CHECK Los Angeles junkman Willie Fulgear, who found last year's stolen Oscars, photographed at his hor January 3, 2001. Behind him is his oversize prop reward check, which—since the money is gone—he hopes he will on eBay.

Looking at the Dumpster behind the grocery store where he stumbled across last year's stolen Oscars, Willie Fulgear wishes he could turn back the clock to when he was just another Los Angeles junkman. Before he found the missing statuettes and reaped the $50,000 reward and a prime seat at the Academy Awards ceremony. Before he was robbed of his reward money. Before, he says, the police began harassing him, the media began lying about him, and people began wondering if larceny, rather than inconceivable luck, had led him to the stolen Oscars.

Hailed a year ago as a hero, air-kissed by Hollywood as the man who "saved" the Oscars, Willie, at 62, is broke, sick with ulcers, and fed up. "Man, I wish I'd never even *seen* them Oscars," he says. "It built me up one day and pushed me right back down the next day. I'm taking medication! I am stressed! I mean *stressed out!*"

Before the ceremony last March, Fulgear bragged that he had "more Oscars than any of the movie stars," that he'd stumbled across "gold," and that "if anybody says 'honesty don't pay,' send them to me." Introduced from the stage of the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion by Billy Crystal, Fulgear waved his top hat to the international audience. Crystal said that the junkman's dream was to someday direct, and that his $50,000 reward for finding the 52 Oscars was "not a lot of money when you consider Miramax and DreamWorks are spending millions just to get *one*." But Willie Fulgear's bounty turned out to be cursed, not only for him but also for everyone

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else who touched the stolen statuettes.

The theft of the Oscars connected two wildly divergent sides of Los Angeles, the seamy underbelly of the scavengers and the gated glory of the movie stars. And for two tense weeks before last year's Academy Awards ceremony, the underbelly got the upper hand as minor-league crooks held the Oscars hostage in South-Central L.A. in a plot that the police and the courts are still trying to untangle. The stolen Oscars, which have been cleaned and re-plated—and will be presented to this year's honorees—had gone for a walk on the wild side. "Aw, man, it was a trip," Larry Ledent, the truckdriver who stole the Oscars, says from jail. "Nobody knows nothing. It's totally different from what you read in the paper."

"Arnold Schwarzenegger came up and shook my hand and said, 'Willie, you're a born star!'"



KING FOR A DAY
Fulgear, in tux and top hat, arrives with his son at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, March 26, 2000.

Just 20 miles away from Beverly Hills lies the municipality of Bell, a flat, gray, industrial landscape of warehouses, train tracks, and trucking companies. The mystery of the stolen Oscars began here, at Roadway Express. In past years, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences sometimes played up the Oscar shipment for publicity; once, it hired a Pinkerton truck to drive the trophies from the Chicago manufacturer to L.A. and arranged "Oscar Night America" events along the way. "But last year we just reverted back to the way it had normally been handled," says Academy executive director Bruce Davis.

On March 2, 2000, 55 Oscars, with serial numbers from 3,005 to 3,059, began their odyssey west. Each 24-karat gold-plated statuette was individually packed in a Styrofoam sarcophagus; they in turn were boxed in 10 packing cases, which were shrink-wrapped onto a pallet by the Chicago manufacturer, R. S. Owens & Company. A Roadway Express driver loaded the 500-pound pallet onto an L.A.-bound carrier. On March 8, at three A.M., the Oscars arrived at the Roadway Express terminal in Bell, a gigantic sorting facility for the entire L.A. area.

The Oscar pallet was parked in space No. 137, the stall for truck deliveries to Beverly Hills. Sometime early that morning, someone on the docks spotted the Motion Picture Academy's name on the pallet. After opening one box, members of the three A.M. shift allegedly took pictures of themselves holding Oscars. Shortly after that, the shipment was loaded not onto the truck bound for the Academy in Beverly Hills but onto one headed for nearby Hawthorne, and the Oscars vanished from Roadway's tracking system.

In a frantic four-day internal investigation, Roadway officials boarded every truck and searched every loading dock in the western United States, finally concluding that the shipment had been stolen. On the morning of March 13, five days after the Oscars disappeared, Bruce Davis was headed to the Beverly Hilton hotel for the annual nominees' luncheon when he got a call from the R. S. Owens foundry. "There's a problem with the shipment," the rep said. "Th[ey] can't find it."

The Oscars, Davis was told, had l[ast] been seen in Bell, California. Oh, no, [he] thought. Two weeks before, 4,000 Osc[ar] ballots mailed to California Acade[my] members had been misrouted, and so[me] were reportedly found in a bulk-mail c[en]ter in Bell, which Davis began calli[ng] "the Bermuda Triangle for Oscar thing[s]." With the awards ceremony only 13 da[ys] away, Academy officials began to wor[ry]. They didn't have a full reserve supply [of] Oscars. Each Oscar is c[ast] individually with a sing[le] mold kept by R. S. Owe[ns]. It was doubtful that a ne[w] batch could be made in tim[e], but a backup batch w[as] nonetheless ordered. (T[he] Academy now keeps a fi[ve]-set of extra Oscars in a sp[e]cial vault.)

Unsure of Roadway's i[n]vestigative ability, Davis te[le]phoned Los Angeles Poli[ce] Department chief Berna[rd] C. Parks. "I think we've lo[st] our Oscars for this year, an[d] we don't have a backup su[p]ply," he told the chief. "C[an] you guys help?"

Detectives were immediately dispatched to Roadway. Th[e] Academy set up a 24-hour tip line, and the F.B.I. joined th[e] hunt. On the morning of March 14, work stopped in the mam[moth] Roadway terminal, and the company's director of secu[rity], with an L.A.P.D. detective at his side, addressed the doc[k] workers. The Oscars had disappeared from the Roadway doc[k], he told them, and any information would be appreciated. Roa[d]way, however, is a union shop, governed by the Internation[al] Brotherhood of Teamsters, whose chief commandment is "Tho[u] shall not rat on your fellow man," no matter how grievous h[is] crime.

To help loosen tongues, Roadway shut down the dock aga[in] the next day, gathered the workers once more, and announced [a] $25,000 reward. The following day, the company doubled the r[e]ward. A voice emerged from the silence—not a Teamster but a[n] attorney. He was representing an unnamed client, he said, an[d] would act as the middleman for an Oscar swap. He wanted [a] $50,000 cashier's check drafted in his name. Once he receive[d] payment, and was assured of no repercussions, he would deliv[er] the Oscars. What the attorney didn't say, but what detective[s] quickly discovered, was that he was the brother-in-law of a Roa[d]way dockworker named Anthony Hart.

Anthony Hart, nicknamed the Whiz, and Lawrence Ed[ward] Ledent, both 39, had met on the Roadway docks an[d] had known each other for only six or seven weeks, bu[t] they showed promise of becoming an industrious team. Ha[rt] drove a forklift; Ledent drove a truck. Once or twice, accordin[g] to Ledent, things "fell off" the trucks that Hart loaded an[d] Ledent drove.

Bald, goateed, tall, and thin, Hart was a five-year veteran o[f] the 3-to-11-A.M. "graveyard" shift. He was noticeable for the im[m]aculate white sneakers he always wore. "I got something o[n] your truck," he told Ledent on the morning of March 8, accor[d]



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police reports. Ledent said that meant that "he was putting something or had put something in my truck that he was stealing."

Weighing 340 pounds, Larry Ledent had dreamed of playing pro football before his brittle bones began breaking one by one, which led him to a job delivering toilets before he started at the Roadway dockyards. Since then his friends had begun to fear that he was becoming "klepto," a fear that would be exacerbated when he followed up the Oscar heist with a penny-ante theft of $200 worth of wooden pallets from his next job, with an Orange County produce distributor. After being apprehended by the police, Ledent told them that he had swiped a few things before with Anthony Hart: minor-league stuff such as boxes of baseball caps, blue jeans, tennis shoes, and purses. (One of Hart's lawyers dismisses this as "baloney.")

"I run the Hawthorne area," Ledent continued. "Anyway, I went on my route and when I finished, I looked inside one of the boxes."

He reached in and lifted an Oscar from its Styrofoam casing. At first he thought it was some type of elaborately bottled cologne, but then he recognized the statuette from having seen it on television. I got the Emmys! he thought. Then, he later testified, "my heart dropped." Panicked, he sat in his truck for 20 minutes. "I just assumed I had to get rid of them," he told the police. First he said that he had put them beside a Dumpster in an alley; later he said that he had dropped them at a South-Central address. Finally he told them that he had dropped them at the side of the house of a friend of his named John Willie Harris.

When Harris got home at noon from his night job driving a garbage truck, he found 10 boxes stacked beside his house. About 15 minutes later, Larry Ledent roared up in his Roadway truck. He told Harris that he had something to show him, then reached into one of the boxes and pulled out an Oscar. "*Voilà!*" he exclaimed.

Harris jumped back as if the cases had been full of snakes. "Man, you're gonna have to get this out of here," he said. "This looks like some serious stuff." Then, dizzied by the gold, Harris demanded money for having the stuff dumped at his place, and suggested $1,000 or $2,000. Harris later said that he never received any cash, and that when he returned home from work the next day the Oscars were gone.

Before moving the Oscars, Ledent took a buddy over to Harris's house. "Look," he said. "Oh, my God, take them back!" the friend told him. But Ledent felt that he'd lose his job if he took them back. "I'll melt them down," he said. But his friend wondered if Ledent wasn't actually planning to shake down Roadway for the reward.

"It was a trip," says Ledent. "It's totally different from what you read in the paper."



THE ACCUSED: Anthony Hart and his attorney Stephen Rosman (holding an Oscar) are surrounded by reporters outside Lennox Justice Center after police let Hart state the Oscars' case.

When Ledent got to work the next day, everyone on the dock seemed to know about the Oscars. "If you can't get rid of them, I can," one dock worker whispered. That same morning, according to Ledent, Anthony Hart handed him an address in Altadena where he wanted the Oscars delivered. ("A total fabrication," says a lawyer for Hart.)

"I dumped them," Ledent told him. According to Ledent, when Hart later asked him to take two of the Oscars to a guy at a Jack in the Box," he complied. Ledent also sold one to a Mexican dude for $10 who wanted his money back when he found out it was hot," according to one source. But Ledent refused Hart's repeated requests to deliver the entire shipment. (An attorney for Hart flatly denies Ledent's account.)

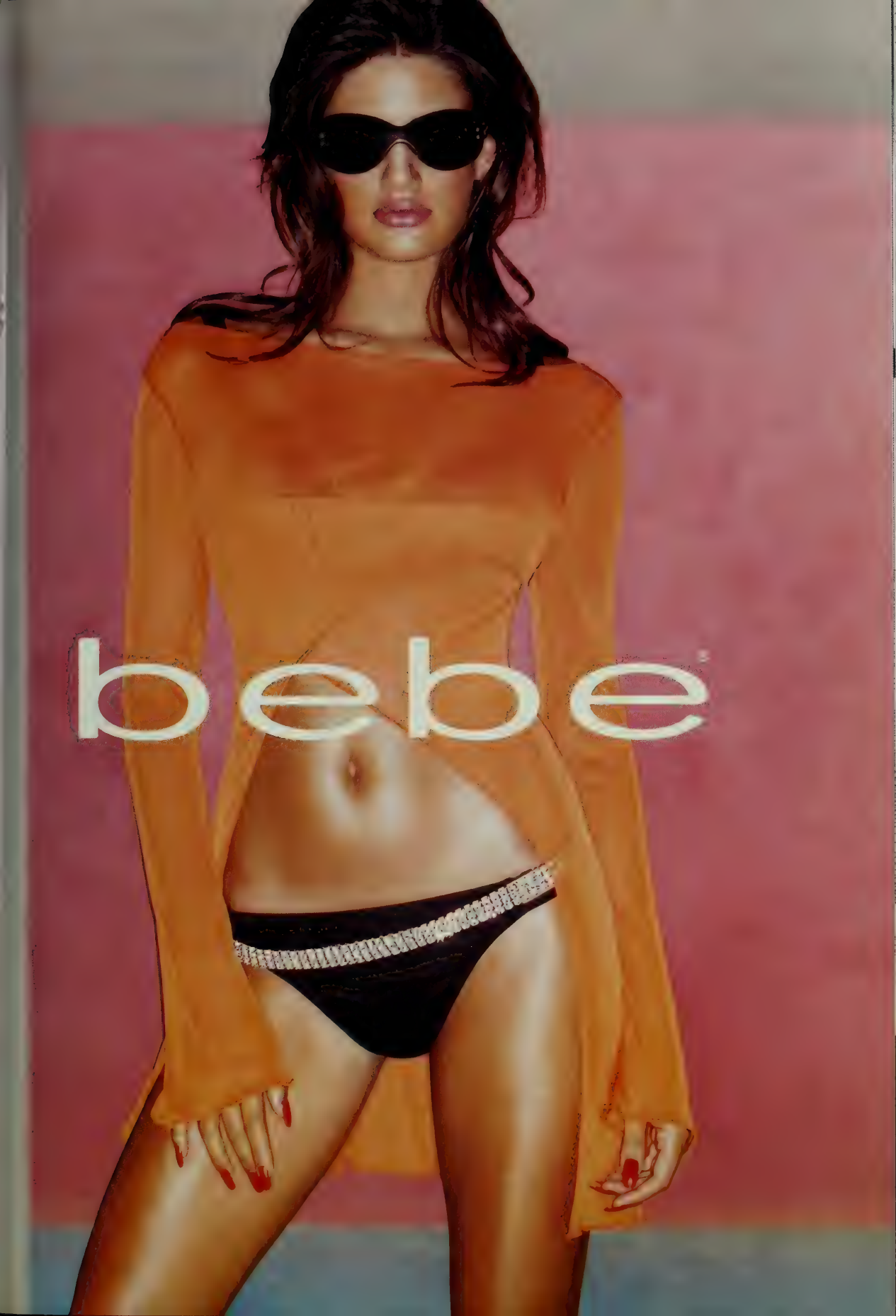
Roadway had drafted two cashier's checks for $25,000 each and was ready to pay the ransom to Hart's brother-in-law, the attorney, in exchange for the Oscars. Neither the checks nor the Oscars were ever delivered. Then a second attorney called Roadway, attempting to broker a deal for a second unnamed client—perhaps Ledent.

On March 18, Larry Ledent and Anthony Hart were arrested at their respective homes. While Ledent was being driven downtown, a detective told him that Hart had confessed and had said that Ledent had three missing Oscars—a ruse designed to get Ledent talking. It worked. He signed a full confession and eventually pleaded no contest to grand-theft charges. He was sentenced to six months in jail, five years' probation, and $51,000 in restitution. Later there were allegations that Hart had put a hit or was trying to put a hit on Larry Ledent. (According to one of Hart's lawyers, "Police investigated and found no basis for the allegations.")

The Oscars never made it to the attorneys or the Altadena address. Instead, 12 hours after Hart and Ledent were arrested, the statuettes, according to Fulgear, somehow magically materialized in and around a Dumpster behind a grocery store.

About this time, Willie Fulgear was having a recurring dream about walking into a room full of gold. God knows, he needed a break. Having been evicted from his home, broke and unable to afford anything but a one-room "dump" with a plywood door, he had slid to a new low in the Los Angeles food chain. The seventh of 12 children born to a single mother in Jackson, Mississippi, he had arrived in L.A. from Chicago in the early 60s at the wheel of a Cadillac, with a green-eyed, Iris blonde at his side and his two younger half-brothers, John and Ray, in the backseat. Fulgear had dreams of becoming a singing sensation, but those dreams slowly fell apart.

He invested in real estate, owned a nightclub, and worked at a dozen other occupations before becoming a junkman. Hardly one of the multitude scrounging for pop bottles and beer cans, he became a collector of the jewels of the junkyard—discarded auto


bebe

mobile transmissions, aluminum wheels, and motors, which he says he "runs up on" in the street or buys low from his "accounts," mostly auto dealerships, and sells at a profit to local metal shops. "Fame ain't nothing without money," Fulgear tells me of his Oscar misadventures as we dine in the junkman's Spago, a Sizzler on South Western Avenue.

Attorneys discovered Harris, at whose house Ledent dropped the Oscars, was Fulgear's half-brother.

After having one of his dreams about the room full of gold, he says, he began scouring the Dumpsters around his home for boxes to move his things to his new address. Driving his 1989 Cadillac Coupe DeVille to the rear of the Food-4-Less at West Venice and South Western, he climbed into a Dumpster and began removing boxes from it. Then his foot hit something hard. He looked down and saw ... *gold!* A little gold man. Then he saw more little gold men, some still in their cases, arranged in and around the Dumpster. "I thought they were toys," he tells me. "Brass. And I can sell brass by the pound."



POLICE LINEUP
One of the 55 recovered Oscars on display at a press conference at L.A.P.D. headquarters, March 20, 2000.

Being in the business of load now, look later, Fulgear quickly stuffed the 500 pounds of boxes and Oscars into his car and raced home. He showed his haul to his son, Allen, who ran a search on the Internet and found news of Roadway's reward. "Dad, you just found $50,000!" Allen exclaimed.

Fulgear made two calls. First he phoned the news department of a local TV station and bellowed, "I got the Oscars!" Once he had assurance that a news crew was on the way, he called the cops. "Hell, yeah!" he says by way of explanation. "A black man with that kind of stuff is automatically guilty!"

The police arrived to find Willie on the street corner, hoisting an Oscar high in the air. "I got the Oscars!" he says he yelled. "And they reached for their pistols. They thought I was holding a gun." But just then the TV crew arrived.

The officers asked Fulgear to return the Oscars to where he had found them, and they helped him unload and arrange them beside the Dumpster. Then they took him downtown to be interrogated. Once that was completed, he was returned to the Dumpster, to pose with the Oscars for the cameramen. That night, Willie Fulgear led every TV newscast, and his story was soon carried around the world.

"We were under enormous pressure to wrap this up with a nice pink bow and say, 'O.K., Willie, here's the $50,000 from Roadway, and here are the tickets to the show,'" says the Academy's Bruce Davis. "But the police were saying, 'His story doesn't quite make sense.'"

Using a polygraph, they questioned Fulgear for hours: *Did anyone tip him off to the location of the stolen Oscars? Did he know anyone at Roadway? Was he, in any way, involved with the theft?* But neither the detectives nor the polygraph could catch him in a lie. "I haven't been in trouble since the 1965 Watts riots, and I didn't do anything then except pick up a camera," Fulgear tells me. Still, Roadway and the Academy stalled, and the more they stalled the more Fulgear became a symbol of H lywood injustice. "The retrieved Osc were still warm from the TV crews' lig at the press conference where they'd be displayed when the jokes began, all a va ation of the same thing: 'That's about t only way a brother's gonna get an Osc in Hollywood,'" columnist Karen Grigs Bates wrote of Willie Fulgear in the *L Angeles Times*. She d manded that Roadw give the junkman t $50,000 reward a that the Academy vite him to the awar ceremony. L.A. radi talk-show hosts ca paigned to send Wil to the Oscars. Listene called in to donate tux makeovers, and manicure

"Fuck it, unhook him Fulgear remembers the d asperated lead detectiv Marc Zavala, finally telli the polygraph operato "Let's call Roadway and g him his check."

Roadway presented Fu gear with the $50,000 rewa at a press conference in fro of L.A.P.D. headquarter Police chief Bernard Parks triumphantly displayed the recover Oscars at a press conference of his own. In his excitement, he m pronounced statuette and said, "The silhouettes will be present be issued at the night of the occasion." (As it happened, t rushed, backup batch was presented at the ceremony.) The Acad my wasn't going to merely give Fulgear two of the up-front sea normally reserved for nominees or presenters; it was going to him for a free tux and send a car to chauffeur him to the ceremon

"How long is the limo?" Fulgear demanded of Bruce Dav when he phoned with the invitation. He also requested a top h to go with his tux. Told that he would be riding in a town ca Fulgear declined. *Inside Edition,* to which he'd sold an exclusiv about the ceremony, would chauffeur him in a stretch.

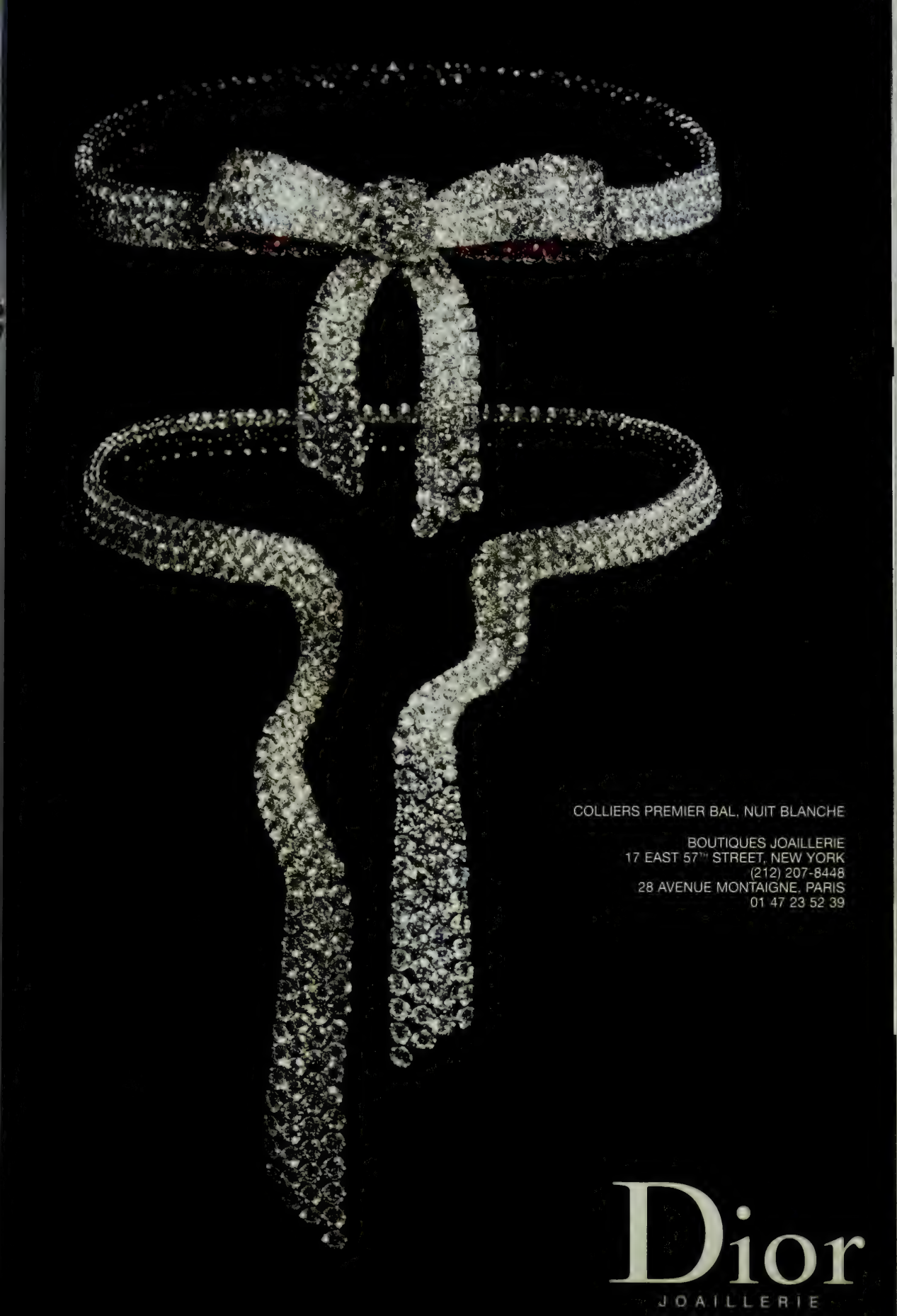
Willie Fulgear strode down the red carpet of the Doroth Chandler Pavilion with his son, Allen, into the Hollywood of h dreams. "Arnold [Schwarzenegger] came up and shook my han and said, 'Willie, you're a born star!'" Fulgear remembers. "An here comes his wife, that Kennedy woman, arms open wide! I' hugging royalty then." Several producers promised him boo and movie deals.

Order had been restored to Hollywood. The thieves had bee apprehended, the reward check bestowed, and all but three the stolen Oscars recovered.

Then the other side of the city began to howl.

The case could have faded away. But last April, Anthon Hart, released from jail for lack of evidence, hired federa civil-rights attorney Stephen Yagman. By filing a $20 millio wrongful-arrest lawsuit against the L.A.P.D., the Academy, Roa way Express, and others, Hart and Yagman ensured that the au thorities would investigate the case until they could prove wha really happened.

The lawsuit portrays Hart's arrest as a police conspiracy straigh out of *L.A. Confidential.* It claims that the L.A.P.D. "hijacked" th



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FULL CIRCLE Willie Fulgear in January 2001, [illegible] Dumpster where he says he found last year's Oscars.

cue from the police in Bell, made a quick but erroneous collar, then paraded the suspects before the panicked Academy and media. The suit blasts Hart's arrest as a charade orchestrated by L.A.P.D. chief Parks, desperate to be credited as the savior of the Oscars and to divert raging reporters from ongoing scandals in his department. (An L.A.P.D. spokesman has said that the department "believed there was sufficient probable cause to warrant [Hart's] arrest.")

Hart's lawsuit suffered a setback when he was indicted by a Los Angeles County grand jury in August, thanks to testimony by Larry Ledent, whose cooperation had been coaxed by an assistant district attorney's suggestion of a reduced jail sentence and a waiver of restitution. Hart's trial is set for April 2.

Meanwhile, Willie Fulgear's moment of triumph was over. He had about $40,000 left from his Roadway reward money, having spent some $17,000 on a gold Lexus, in which he planned to return to Mississippi and build his dream house. He kept the money in cash, and as he was packing for Mississippi, he remembers, "at the last minute, I thought, What if I have an accident and somebody takes my money? So I put it in my safe."

When he returned from Mississippi a month later, around June 1, he found his home ransacked and his safe gone. All the thieves had left behind was the giant Roadway prop reward check which Fulgear had posed with at his press conference and which he now hopes to auction off for quick cash on eBay. He reported the burglary to the police, but there wasn't much of an investigation. The police, the Academy, and the attorneys involved were skeptical. (Fulgear showed me indentations on his rug where, he swears, his safe had once sat, and introduced me to a number of friends who vouched for the theft of the safe and the depth of his integrity.)

That was just the beginning. Digging through boxes of discovery documents in preparation for Anthony Hart's trial, Hart's attorneys discovered a police report stating that John Willie Harris, at whose house Larry Ledent dropped the stolen Oscars, was Willie Fulgear's half-brother, one of the two youngsters in the backseat of his car when he arrived in Los Angeles.

Harris was arrested for receiving stolen property, and the police turned their attention once again to Willie Fulgear.

John Willie Harris, 54, who had aspirations of becoming an actor before beginning a 19-year stint as a truckdriver on the three A.M. shift for the Santa Monica sanitation department, sits in an L.A. County criminal court. He faces a possible six years in jail for receiving stolen property and being an accessory after the fact to grand theft.

"Man, I wish I'd never *seen* them Oscars," Fulgear says. "I'm taking medication! I am stressed!"

Waiting in the back of the courtro for his preliminary hearing, Harris t me, "The police are trying to say I t Willie to come to my house and pick the Oscars, but that's impossible!" swears that he and Willie hadn't spok since a disagreement two years ago, a that they reconciled only when Wi showed up at one of Harris's recent he ings to demonstrate his support and p claim his half-brother's innocence. "I d even have Willie's phone number!" he s

While Harris's case is pending court, detectives continue to wonde there's a link between Willie Fulgear a his half-brother which would prove that the junkman didn't j stumble across the Oscars. As of this writing, Fulgear rema uncharged and unwavering. "It was like winning the lottery," says of the unbelievable odds of his discovery. Richard Milla Anthony Hart's defense attorney, has a different view: "If y believe he just coincidentally found the Oscars in an alley, I got a piece of the Brooklyn Bridge I'd like to sell you."

As for Willie Fulgear, he has put the word out that he'd l seats for this year's Oscars ceremony. Thus far, the Acade hasn't contacted him. □

FOR DETAILS, SEE CREDITS PAGE

[redacted]

THE DEVIL IN MISS DAVIS

An evening with Bette Davis could be full of laughter; it could as easily turn into a nightmare. From Davis's edgy relationship with Hollywood society to the night she came at him with a kitchen knife, a veteran producer recalls his seven-year friendship with the tempestuous legend

BY WILLIAM FRYE



DOWNTIME
Bette Davis at 38, relaxing with coffee and a cigarette during a break on the set of *Deception*, her 57th film, 1946

I always thought of Bette Davis as a lonely lady. Describing my seven-year association with her as intense would be an understatement. When you dealt with Bette, 7 years could seem like 70. She had that effect on you. Our friendship began in 1957 when I cast her in a TV show I was producing, but I had met her 10 years earlier.

At that time I was a young agent in Hollywood, hand-holding clients as they taped radio shows at the NBC studios at Sunset and Vine. Those clients included Rosalind Russell, Douglas Fairbanks Jr., Cary Grant, Dick Powell, Lucille Ball, and Ronald Colman, and during lunch breaks they would walk down to the Brown Derby on Vine Street. Joel McCrea never wanted anything that fancy, so he and I would eat across the street from NBC at Will Wright's ice-cream parlor.

One day when we were there having our regular tuna-fish sandwiches and chocolate malts, Bette Davis walked in. She came right over to our table, and she and Joel embraced like o lovers. Joel introduced me, but I said virtually nothing—I w too overwhelmed. *Of Human Bondage, The Petrified Forest, Je ebel, Dark Victory, Now, Voyager*—Davis's films had provide some of the most unforgettable moments of my life up to the It's funny; I was never intimidated at meeting any of the oth great Hollywood ladies—Greer Garson, Greta Garbo, Joa Crawford, Claudette Colbert—but my first time in the Davis pre ence left me speechless.

To me Bette Davis was the Great Star. To the Hollywoo community, however, she seemed an outsider. Although sh wrote in one of her memoirs that the great and gracious Holl wood hosts were the David Selznicks, the Joseph Cottens, ar the Ronald Colmans, she seldom, if ever, attended any of th brunches, cocktail parties, or dinners in those elegant residence Why was she an outsider? At least partly, I think, because sh

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LEADING LADY Bette Davis discusses the script on the *Deception* set, about a year before she met William Frye.

pointed his right index finger
Bette's face in order to empl
size something he was sayi
To make matters worse, H
schel had lost the tip of that f
ger in a childhood accident.
a flash, the Davis bomb explo
ed. "Don't you *dare* put yo
finger in my face!" she bellow
at the hapless director. Hersc
tried to apologize, but to
avail. "I never want to *see* y
again!" she roared.

By this time the restaura
had become very quiet. Eve
one was listening to Bette D
vis rave. Even the piano play
stopped playing. Bette's husba
Gary Merrill, simply stood
and left. No "Good night," no
ing. He just walked out, mutt
ing, "I've had it."

Then Herschel got up and l
with his wife. Bette and I we
suddenly alone, and as quick
as she had exploded, she calm
down. "Cleaned this place o

"*Goddamn it,* I was *acting* before you were even *thought* of," she screamed.

was not a "safe" person to have around. She was capable of blowing up at any moment, and no host or hostess wanted to risk a fierce outburst in the middle of a delicately constructed social affair.

MCA superagent Jules Stein was one of the great Hollywood hosts to whose home Bette Davis *was* invited. She was one of his major clients. And it was at a cocktail party at the Steins' sprawling Angeleno estate, Misty Mountain, that I met Davis for the second time, a full 10 years after that day with Joel McCrea. By then I was producing *General Electric Theater,* a weekly half-hour anthology series hosted by Ronald Reagan, and the series was owned by MCA/Revue Productions, which had been founded by Stein. Davis had agreed to star in an upcoming episode, so this time we had a solid basis for a conversation.

From the start, I realized that having Bette Davis work for you was a mixed blessing. She was a magnificently talented actress, but the emotional baggage she brought with her was awesome.

The first picture she did for me at *G.E. Theater, Malice Toward One,* was also her first made-for-TV film. To make sure things went smoothly, I hired the talented television director Herschel Daugherty, whom I had used several times before. I thought he and Bette would get along just fine, but to be doubly certain, a couple of weeks before the cameras were to roll, I took them and their spouses to dinner at a modest but popular place on La Cienega Boulevard called the Ready Room. Ordinarily, I would have chosen a tonier restaurant—Chasen's or Romanoff's—but because Bette was a master at creating scenes, you had to be very careful where you took her. The really in spots were, unfortunately, often out as far as Miss Davis was concerned. If you were going to be thrown out of a place, better the Ready Room than Chasen's.

The dinner went quite well until Herschel, after a few drinks, pretty good, didn't I?" she said as a sly smile appeared on h
face. "Now let's go someplace!"

With that we were off to Mocambo, a club on the Suns
Strip. Going to Mocambo was not my idea; it was Bette's, a
it was an unfortunate choice. But when Bette Davis decid
she wanted to go somewhere, you went. Naturally, we didn
have a reservation, and Mocambo was jammed. There was
line of people standing behind a red rope waiting to get i
Bette was no more going to join that queue than fly to th
moon. She marched up to the maître d' and said, "We want
table for two."

"I'm terribly sorry, Miss Davis, there's not an empty table
the room. Would you like to go to the bar and wait until one b
comes available?"

"*No,*" she said haughtily. "*Put one up.*"

Moments later, we were escorted into the main room. Rig
next to the stage, where everyone could see us, they had put up
table about the size of a silver dollar. As Bette was being seate
she spotted two people at the door who were also having troub
getting in—Esther Williams and her husband, Ben Gage. "E
ther! Ben!" she called across the room. "Come join us! There
lots of room!"

They, too, jumped the line, and two more chairs were brough
to our table. We danced and drank until the club closed.

A second project Bette did for me also started out on a disa
trous note. I had found a marvelous story by Daphne d
Maurier called "Split Second," which I had adapted speci
ically for her. It was to be a one-hour television special, directe
by the German filmmaker John Brahm, who had directed th
1944 cult classic *The Lodger.*

Bette said she was keen to do it, and the rehearsals went wel
I knew it was going to be a good film. With Bette, however, jus
when you thought everything was shaping up nicely, all he
would break loose. At five A.M. the day shooting was to start, m


FENDI
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ON LAS VEGAS MANHASSET MAUI MEXICO CITY MONTERREY NASSAU
ORK PUNTA DEL ESTE SHORT HILLS STAMFORD VANCOUVER WAIKIKI

[illegible] "Bill, it's Bette. You're going to have to get somebody [illegible] for the part. There's no way I can do the picture."

"Bette, you're due at the studio in an hour for makeup. You [illegible] to do this picture."

"Well, I won't be there. I'm not feeling well. I'm sick."

"Have you called a doctor?"

"No. I don't need a doctor. I just can't do it. You'll have to get somebody else."

After a long silence, I said, "Bette, I'm going to tell you something, and I want you to listen. *Split Second* was written especially for you. Besides, you need to work. You need the money. And if you don't do it, the studio will sue you so fast that you'll never work again. Now, I'm going to send Dr. Bethea to see you. William Bethea is a friend of mine who lives near you. We'll revise the shooting schedule so we can shoot around you today."

Later that morning I got a call from Bethea. It turned out Bette wasn't really sick at all. She and Gary had had a battle the night before. The fight had started inside the house, but as it got wilder they moved outside. Eventually Bette fell, or was pushed, onto the gravel driveway. One side of her face was badly bruised and scratched. She couldn't be photographed.

On the second day of filming, Bette did come to the set, and we were able to shoot with the good side of her face to the camera. By the third day, with heavy makeup on the injured side, we were back to normal, though "normal" was not a word anyone ever used around Bette Davis.

A few days later, looking at the dailies, I was shocked to see that the director had shot a crucially important scene with Bette's back to the camera. When I complained, Brahm said, "That was the only way she'd do it."

"I don't care," I replied. "I want to see her face. I didn't hire Bette Davis to see the back of her head!"

"Well," he countered, "you're the producer—*you* try. She won't do it for me."

I went to her dressing room, and the scene that followed was every bit as nasty as I feared it would be.

"*Goddamn it,* I was *acting* before you were even *thought* of," she screamed at me.

"I'm sure that's true," I replied. "But now that I *have* been thought of, and now that I'm producing this picture, we're going to do it my way. But I'll tell you what I'll do. We're going to shoot the scene with your face to the camera, and tomorrow you come to the dailies. If you honestly feel that the scene works better with your back than with your face, that's the way we'll cut it."

It wasn't easy, but the next day we reshot the scene with her face to the camera. She was brilliant. The following afternoon the dailies session was jammed, for word had spread about our standoff. The director, the cameraman, the script supervisor, even the hair and makeup people, were there. So was Bette. After we ran the minute-and-a-half scene both ways—her version, then mine—she got up and walked out of the projection room without saying a word.

Everyone was quiet for a moment or two. Then somebody said to me, "What do you think? Which one will we use?"

"Oh, the face-to-camera," I replied. "If Miss Davis thought her version was better than mine, she would have walked up to me, shoved her finger in my face, and said, 'You see, I was right all along!'"

For the next few days, Bette and I kept our distance. She didn't talk to me; I didn't talk to her. The last day of filming happened to be her 50th birthday. My associate, James Wharton, h[illegible] arranged for a huge bucket of ice, lots of glasses, and bottles [illegible] vodka, scotch, and champagne to be put in her dressing roo[illegible] which was on the soundstage.

At about five P.M., after the final scene had been shot, the [illegible] rector, writer, and cameraman joined Bette in her dressing roo[illegible] Soon a loud voice was heard throughout the whole stage ar[illegible] "Where's that producer who thinks he knows everything? T[illegible] him to get his ass into my room for a drink!"

We were friends again. After a few drinks, it became cle[illegible] that she didn't have any plans for her birthday, so I invited h[illegible] up to my house in Coldwater Canyon for a last-minute poolsi[illegible] supper with some of the cast and crew. It was one of the b[illegible] nights the house ever saw, full of fun and laughter.

Bette came to Coldwater Canyon many times after that. O[illegible] evening I had a party for about a dozen people, includi[illegible] Rosalind Russell, Janet Gaynor, and Gaynor's husban[illegible] Adrian, the famed costume designer. Bette Davis and Gary M[illegible] rill were the last to arrive. They came in with a great flourish. [illegible] was obvious they'd had a "dressing drink," but they were char[illegible] ing and seemed delighted to be meeting Adrian and Janet.

Five minutes later the doorbell rang. The unexpected gu[illegible] was a policeman. "Is Mr. Gary Merrill here?" he asked m[illegible] Thinking something had happened to someone in his family, [illegible] to their home, I called Gary to the door, whereupon the offic[illegible] handed him a subpoena—for what I don't know to this day.

Mocambo was jammed. Bette said to the maître d', "We want a table for two."

we walked back into the living room, Gary held it up and sai[illegible] "Jesus Christ, look what I just got."

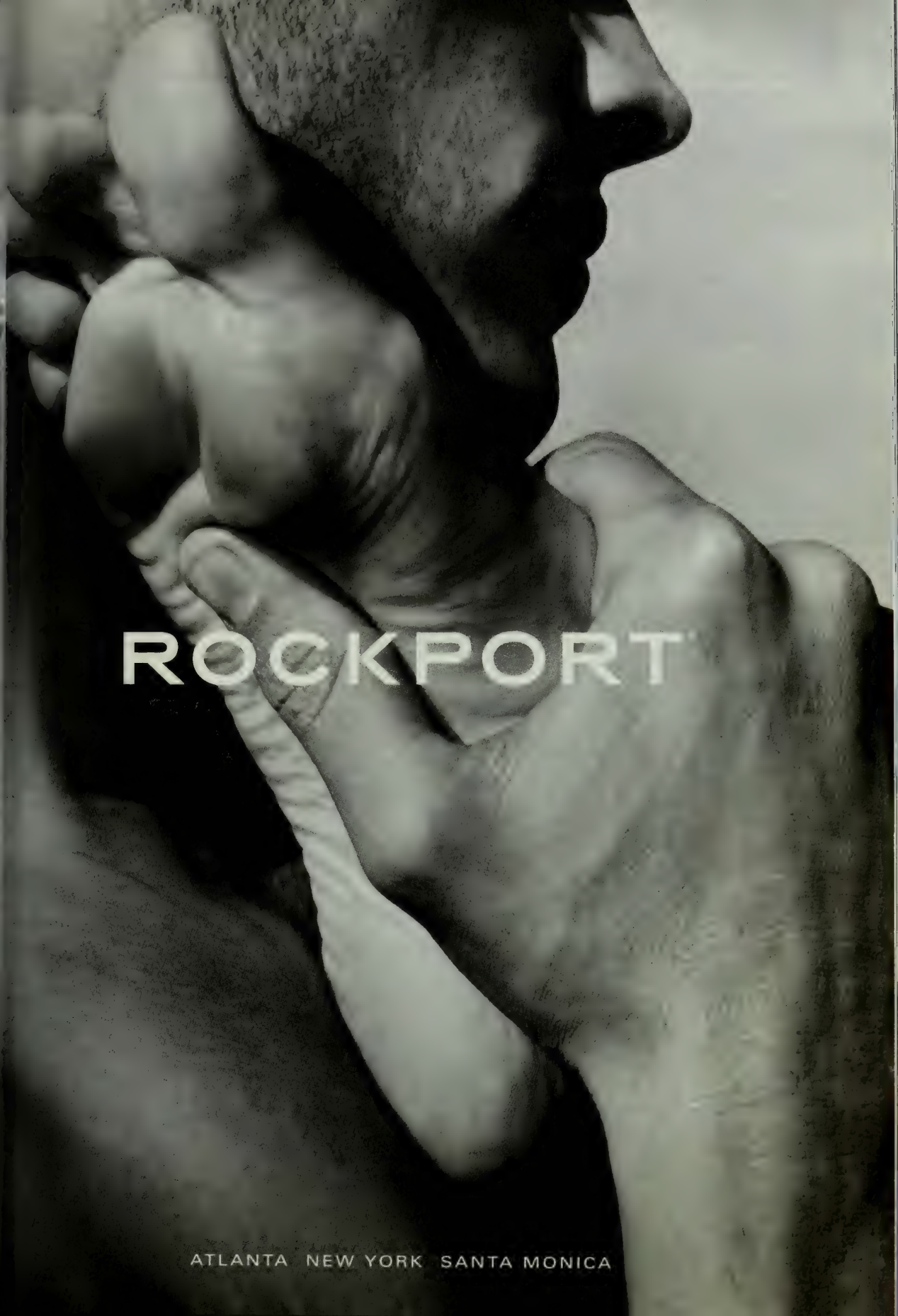
Bette said very loudly and very accusingly, "Who the h[illegible] opened the door?" Immediately she was a changed person, a[illegible] the evening turned into a nightmare. Bette and Gary, the last [illegible] arrive, were the first to leave.

Janet and Adrian were stunned. Since he was at MGM a[illegible] Bette was at Warner, he'd never met the tempestuous star. Jan[illegible] summed up the evening—and her fellow actress—brilliantly: "We[illegible] honey, no wonder she won all those Academy Awards. She's ju[illegible] like that in real life!"

Everybody has heard about the larger-than-life Bette Davi[illegible] But she was, like so many great artists, a bundle of contr[illegible] dictions. On the one hand she could be a moody an[illegible] petulant bully, who carefully cultivated inflexible opinions an[illegible] fostered great hates. On the other she was a sensitive woma[illegible] who—provided you were one of the few people she reall[illegible] liked—cared deeply about your health and happiness. N[illegible] many people got to see that side of her, but it's the side I li[illegible] to remember.

For instance, over the years she sent me many adoring le[illegible] ters, and I never doubted that she was completely sincere [illegible] them. Once, I took her charm bracelet and had it cleaned f[illegible] her, and she was almost speechless with thanks. Another tim[illegible] I gave her perfume—for no particular reason, just because sh[illegible] was a friend—and she was so pleased and surprised that sh[illegible] hardly knew what to say. I could see that people seldom di[illegible] things for Bette simply out of kindness, not expecting anythin[illegible] in return.

One summer afternoon, when friends from Kansas City wer[illegible] visiting me with their children, I invited Bette to come up an[illegible] bring her kids. B.D. and Michael got along famously with th[illegible] other girl and boy, and Bette and the other woman talked happ[illegible]



ATLANTA NEW YORK SANTA MONICA

[illegible] Bette. They never mentioned Hollywood or films or movie stars. They were just two mothers discussing the joys and disappointments of raising children.

When *G.E. Theater* ended in 1960, I started producing a series called *Thriller,* starring Boris Karloff. In my never-ending search for new material, I found a terrific book by Henry Farrell called *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?* After reading it a couple of times, I decided that, while it was too long and complex for *Thriller,* it could work beautifully as a feature film—specifically, *my* first feature film.

I gave the book to Bette, and she loved it. I also gave a copy to Olivia de Havilland, who I thought would be right to play the bedridden younger sister. Ida Lupino, who'd directed many *Thriller* episodes for me, was my choice to direct.

Full of excitement, I took the book to Lew Wasserman, the head of Universal. You could always get a quick response from Lew. He took his reading to Palm Springs Friday night; Monday morning you had your answer.

"Who do you want to do it with?" he asked.

"Bette Davis and Olivia de Havilland. Ida Lupino to direct."

Bette had just finished a guest appearance on Universal TV's *Wagon Train,* and according to Lew Wasserman she wasn't very good. Therefore, Universal had no intention of making a full-length feature with her. I said I didn't want to do it with anybody else, so the idea was shelved.

A few months later, while I was in Monaco producing a special with Grace Kelly, I read in the trades that the director Robert Aldrich had acquired the rights to the book. I found out that Ida Lupino had told him about it; they were both represented by the William Morris Agency. Aldrich wanted Joan Crawford to play Baby Jane.

Bette Davis herself gave me an update when I had lunch with her in New York on my way home from Europe. "You'll never believe it," she said, "but Crawford gave me a copy of the book with a note suggesting I play the younger sister. I told her never to know the book, and the only part I'm interested in is Baby Jane."

In the end, Crawford saw the light and played the younger sister to Bette's Baby Jane. While the picture was being made—in just six weeks, for less than $1 million—I got a daily detailed report from Bette. I'd stop by her Heather Drive house for a drink or we'd talk on the phone. Gary Merrill was by then out of her life.

I'd always known Bette didn't exactly love and admire the woman she began to call La Belle Crawford; it soon became apparent, however, that she actively despised her.

"Is it *you,* sending me one rose every day?" she asked me over dinner one night.

"It's not me."

"Well, *somebody* is sending me *one damn rose* every day in a lousy little bud vase, and it's driving me *crazy.* If you're going to send *roses,* for God's sake, send a *dozen,* or more."

She soon found out that the roses were coming from her co-star, and she was repulsed.

While *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?* was being filmed

It soon became apparent that Bette actively despised La Belle Crawford.



STARS WAR Bette Davis and Joan Crawford in 1962 on the set of *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?* "No one will pay to see those two old broads act," said Jack Warner.

Bette's autobiography *The Lonely Life* was published. I was at her house when she opened the box of complimentary copies her publisher had sent her. She gave me one and inscribed it, "To dear Bill, who has made this life a little less lonely." I could hardly believe her honesty.

A few days later, a small crisis involving the book arose: "La Belle Crawford wants an autographed book."

"Give her one," I said.

"But what will I write? I sure as hell can't start out with 'Dear Joan.'"

The next time I stopped by her house, she was in a very good mood. "I *autographed* a book for La Belle Crawford. I wrote, 'Joan, Thanks for wanting my autograph. Bette.'"

"No one will pay to see those two old broads act," Jack Warner, her former studio boss, had predicted when he heard about *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?* He was resoundingly wrong. The movie was a huge hit. Its financial success was important to Bette; her up-front fee and profit-participation checks made it possible for her to maintain separate homes in Bel Air and New England.

The day after the Academy Award nominations were announced in 1963, my phone rang. It was Bette, calling from the Plaza Hotel in New York. "Bill, *darling,* have you heard? I've been nominated for *Baby Jane.*"

I had heard, and I congratulated her.

"Will you take me to the Academy Awards?"

I told her I'd be delighted. After the film's release Bette had dropped out of sight for several months. The late 1950s had not been good to Bette Davis, i

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terms of either her career or her appearance. As the day of the Academy Awards approached, I found myself fantasizing about a new Bette Davis. *Maybe,* I thought, she'd been using her time off to be remade—a few tucks here, a few pounds lost there. But when I picked her up in my car that evening, I saw she hadn't changed one bit.

The dress she was wearing was the same dress she'd worn onstage in Los Angeles for a program of readings with Gary Merrill entitled *The World of Carl Sandburg.* It was black, with an orange panel down the front. For the Academy Awards, I realized with horror, she had somehow managed to put it on backward, so the splash of color went down her back.

Joan Crawford, by contrast, was a sight to behold that evening. Edith Head had crafted a breathtaking beaded silver sheath for her. Crawford topped that off with caviar pearls and diamonds on her fingers, wrists, neck, and ears. We didn't know when we arrived at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium that Crawford had arranged with Anne Bancroft, who was nominated for best actress for *The Miracle Worker* but who was appearing onstage that night in New York, to accept on her behalf if she won.

Bancroft did win, and Crawford did accept. And Davis was livid. Watching Crawford stand there next to Gregory Peck clutching Anne Bancroft's Oscar, Bette became so angry that she turned to me and said loudly, "Let's get *out* of here!"

She stood up, and we left the auditorium before the ceremony was over. Bette wanted to go home, but I persuaded her to make an appearance, at least, at the post-ceremony party at the Beverly Hilton. There we were joined by Bette's sister, Bobby, Bette's daughter B.D., Bob Aldrich and his wife, and Olivia de Havilland. At the center of each table were bottles of vodka, gin, bourbon, and scotch. The first thing Bette did was take a glass and fill it with scotch, right to the top—no water, no ice. "This is for La Belle Crawford," she said.

"She doesn't drink scotch," I said. "She drinks vodka."

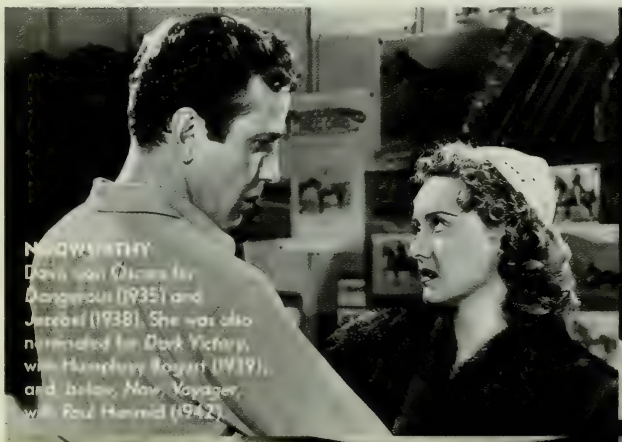
"I don't care *what* she *drinks.* This is going into her *fucki face.*"

A few moments later, Joan Crawford appeared at the entrance to the ballroom and surveyed the party in her imperi manner. Her eyes zeroed in on Bette, and for one moment I w sure she was going to come over to our table. Instead s turned to her left, circled the whole room, and sat far aw from us. But not far enough for Bette. "I *refuse* to be in t same room with her. I don't care *how* big the room is," she a nounced, and demanded that we leave.

We all went back to her house and sat around the kitche I settled down in a rocking chair. You would never ha guessed it, but Bette Davis was a real homemaker. The was something very old-fashioned-New-England about her, and always surprised me when that side of her surfaced.

In Bette's kitchen, eggs weren't kept in the refrigerator. S had a big bowl of them out on the counter. Butter wasn't ke in the refrigerator, either; it was on the table, in a big count crock. Bread wasn't kept in a cupboard or a drawer; she alwa had freshly baked loaves sticking out of wicker baskets. S didn't spend all that much time in her kitchen, and she wasn a great cook, but she loved the *notion* of puttering aroun wrapped in an apron, being the generous provider. At a litt

Bette said she'd coined the term "Oscar," in honor of her first husband's ass.



NEW OSCAR-WORTHY
Davis won Oscars for *Dangerous* (1935) and *Jezebel* (1938). She was also nominated for *Dark Victory*, with Humphrey Bogart (1939), and, below, *Now, Voyager*, with Paul Henreid (1942).







CLASSIC TURNS
More Oscar nominations: *All About Eve*, above, with her future husband, Gary Merrill (1950), and *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?*, with her nemesis Joan Crawford (1962).



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BUMPY Bette Davis and her fourth husband, Gary Merrill, play Scrabble in the backseat of a limousine, 1950.

I called Gary to the door, whereupon the officer handed him a subpoena.

Fourth of July party the previous year, she had handed everyone a lunch pail containing a store-bought sandwich, a cookie, and an apple.

That night, after drinks were poured, Bette decided we'd have scrambled eggs and toast. She got out a large knife and started slicing a loaf of bread.

Thinking back over the evening, Olivia de Havilland became very upset. She said it was terrible that Bette had lost, terrible that Joan Crawford had stolen the night, terrible, too, that the world would wake up the next morning to pictures of Crawford clutching an Oscar and assume she'd won it for *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?* Bette interrupted to remind us that she had coined the term "Oscar," in honor of her first husband's ass! His name was Harmon Oscar Nelson Jr.

At that moment I made the most inappropriate comment I've ever made in my life—the wrong thing at the wrong time in front of the wrong person. I still cringe to recall it. I suddenly said, "Well, you have to admit, when Crawford came out on that stage, with that dress and that array of diamonds, she did look like the movie star of all time."

There was dead silence. Olivia stopped commiserating. Bette stopped slicing bread. I stopped rocking.

"What did you say?" Bette asked, looking up. When I didn't reply, she came at me with the knife. Pressing it to my chest, she repeated, "*What did you say?*"

I sat frozen in the rocker, imagining blood dripping down my pleated evening shirt, and repeated the monumentally stupid—but accurate—thing I'd said a few seconds earlier. After another interminable silence, she took the knife away. "You make me *sick*" was all she said.

Then she went back to slicing bread, and the party resumed. After more drinks, everybody had scrambled eggs and toast. I got home at five A.M. The "evening" had started 12 hours earlier. Neither of us ever mentioned the knife incident again.

If there were bad moments with Bette, there were also great highs. Once, in the late 50s, we spent a glorious week together in Rome. Bette was staying at the Excelsior Hotel, and I was at the Hassler. B.D. was with her, and I think Bobby must have been, too.

Bette loved to plan what she called "excursions." She was *very* organized and *very* punctual. One night over dinner she announced that she had a "little surprise" lined up for us the next day, and that she'd pick me up at 9:15. We were going to the film studios to visit the set of *Ben-Hur* and, not incidentally, her favorite director, William Wyler, who had directed her in *Jezebel*, *The Letter,* and *The Little Foxes.* People said they had had a great fling years earlier.

We toured the studio and the set and walked into the great arena where the chariot races were being filmed. Everything stopped when Bette Davis swished onto the scene. She certainly wasn't at her moviemaking zenith at that time, but she radiated electricity. She didn't even look terrific—her hair was very short, she had on a very plain dress, she was wearing gloves—but none of that mattered. She was *the* star.

Two or three days later, I was invited to a cocktail party given by a rather well-known dress designer. I asked Bette if she would like to go, because I had heard that Anna Magnani was going to be there. Bette said fine, so we went to the cocktail party, and the two stars hit it off. These two great actresses hugged and kissed like old friends. Magnani asked if we would like to join her the next night for dinner at her favorite trattoria, which was just outside the walls of Rome. Bette and B.D., my friend Jim Wharton, and I were picked up in a CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



TEN TALES OF LUXURY, TALENT AND YOUTH

Whether bathing in the camera's eye or contributing behind the scenes, the 10 individuals you'll meet on the following pages have interpreted their own version of luxury. They've defied old conventions by carving out successful careers that carry their personal stamp and fully engage their considerable passions.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY SAM JONES

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AMERICAN LUXURY




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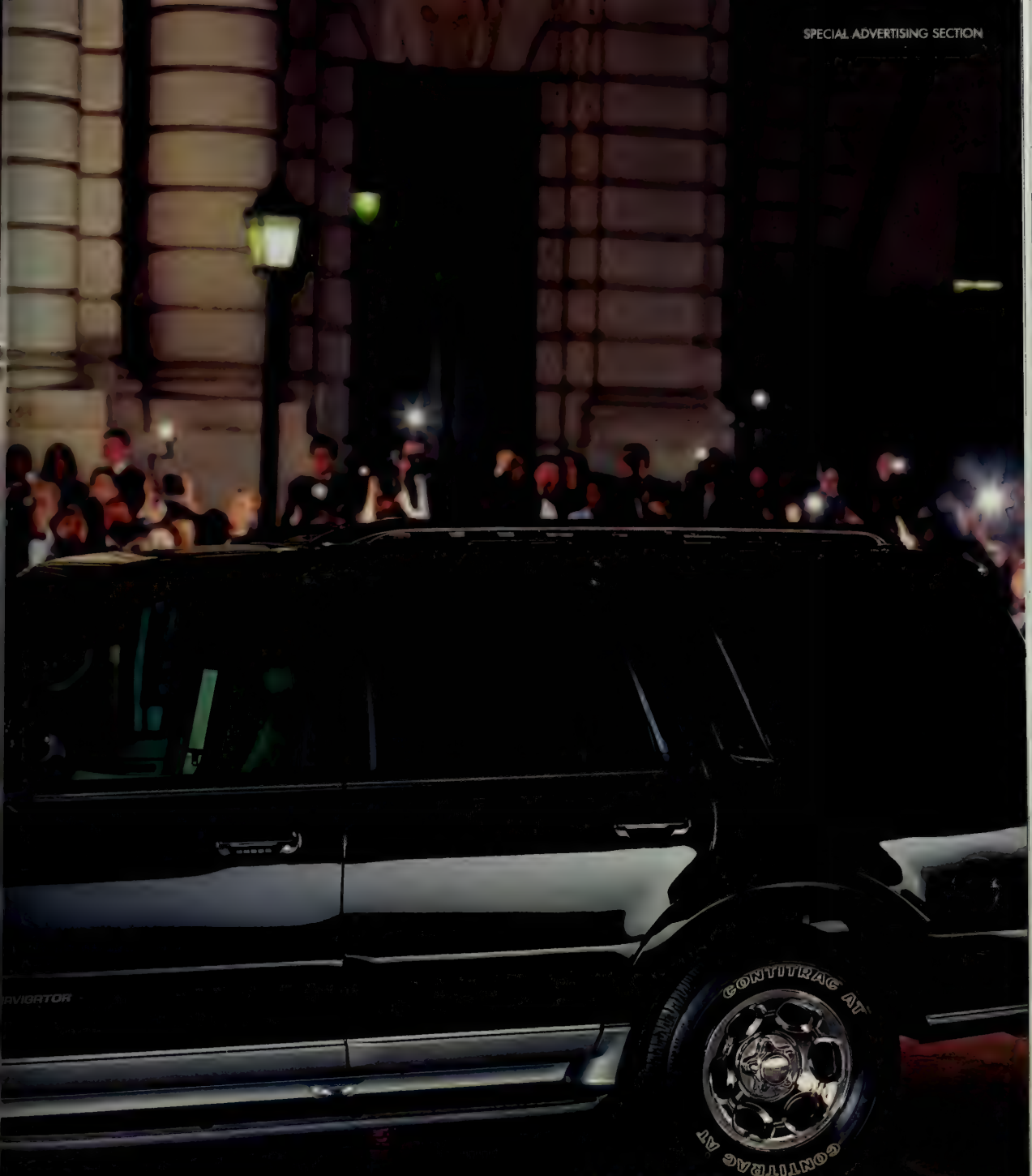
Actress

Talk about typecasting. At age 15, Dominique Swain nailed the part of the precocious temptress in Adrian Lyne's 1998 *Lolita* adaptation. Suddenly, she was Hollywood's next big thing—but that next big role was elusive. So, after a short break, she plunged back in, recently completing five independent films: *Happy Campers, Tart, The Intern, Dead in the Water,* and *Pumpkin,* opposite Christina Ricci. Here she takes a well-deserved breather atop the 2001 Lincoln LS. Next stop: Mrs. Robinson?






CONTINENTAL



CARLA GUGINO Actress/Producer

You've heard the story: child of divorce, top of her class, spotted by modeling scouts, falls into acting and gets bitten...hard. Carla Gugino—"arriving" here in the 2001 Lincoln Navigator—has nailed that story...and transcended it. Whether playing high drama (in *Snake Eyes* opposite Nicolas Cage) or comedic foil (with Antonio Banderas in *Spy Kids*, due in March), she exudes an unmistakable "leading lady" aura. You first saw her as Michael J. Fox's *Spin City* girlfriend—or the hard-edged surgeon on *Chicago Hope*, or the dangerous beauty in *Judas Kiss*, which she produced. Her next big thing: Frank Whaley's *The Jimmy Club*, co-starring Whaley and Ethan Hawke.





ANDREW KOSOVE & BRODERICK JOHNSON
Producers, Alcon Entertainment

If you loved the fiercely cute Jack Russell terrier in *My Dog Skip* or identified with the stoned-out "dudes" in *Dude, Where's My Car?*, then Kosove and Johnson have definitely gotten through to you. The two producers, who met at Princeton University, are on a roll, grossing $34 million on the former and $45 million on the latter. Next up is *The Affair of the Necklace*, a lush period piece starring Hilary Swank (due out in fall 2001). And they always do it *their* way—here, taking a meeting comfortably in the 2001 Lincoln LS.



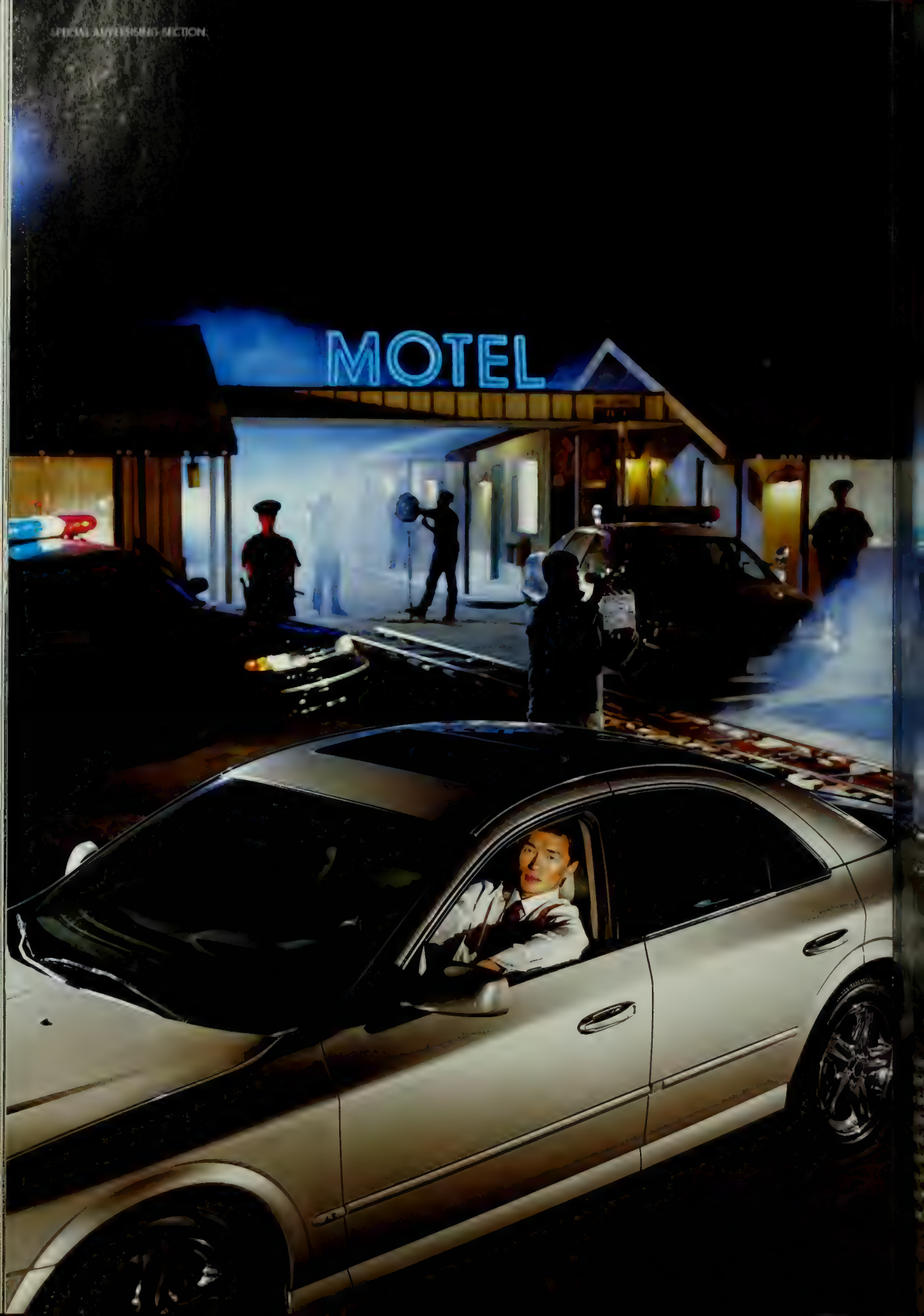
JASON ISAACS Actor

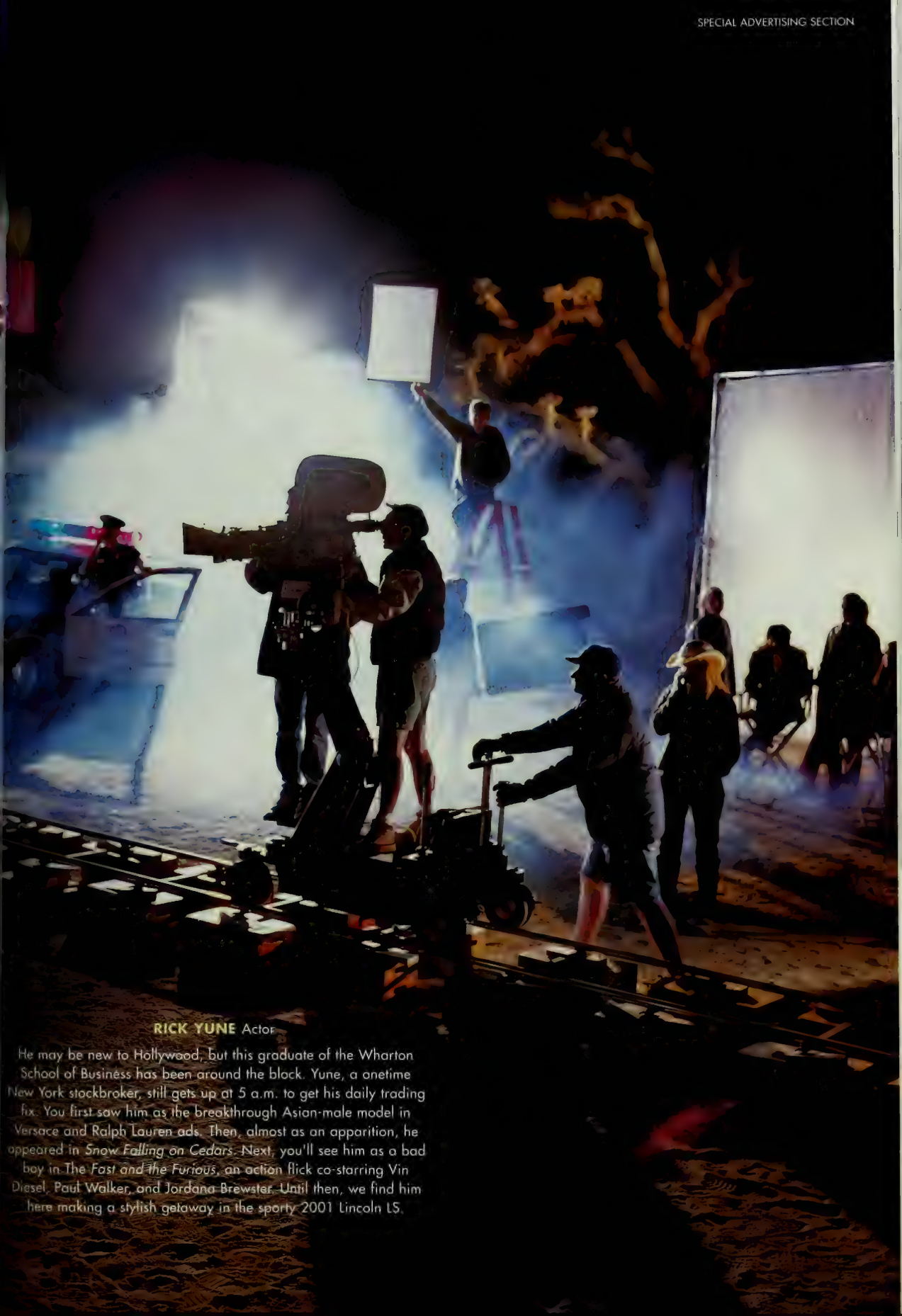
Oooh, those eyes. They'll stare right through you with plenty of menace and intensity—just ask Mel Gibson about *The Patriot*. They can also ease your troubled mind—as they did for Julianne Moore in *The End of the Affair*. Soon they'll make you giggle euphorically —Isaacs plays quite a flamboyant role in *Sweet November*, co-starring Keanu Reeves and Charlize Theron. Here, he lets the luxury of a 2002 Lincoln Blackwood soften his gaze. Even so, it's clear that Isaacs has the kind of intensity that's slow to fade.



BETSY HEIMANN Costume Designer

A costume designer for films like *Almost Famous, Family Man, Pulp Fiction,* and Cameron Crowe's eagerly anticipated *Vanilla Sky*, Heimann has a knack for choosing and designing the right clothes and accessories for America's favorite actors. Here, she surveys sleek 2002 Blackwood sketches amid her own original designs. Although Heimann's designs appear on the silver screen, instead of the runway, their influence on fashion is not lost. Who can forget Kate Hudson's velvet-and-white fur coat in *Almost Famous*? A breakout outfit to suit a breakout performance.


MOTEL



RICK YUNE Actor

He may be new to Hollywood, but this graduate of the Wharton School of Business has been around the block. Yune, a onetime New York stockbroker, still gets up at 5 a.m. to get his daily trading fix. You first saw him as the breakthrough Asian-male model in Versace and Ralph Lauren ads. Then, almost as an apparition, he appeared in *Snow Falling on Cedars*. Next, you'll see him as a bad boy in *The Fast and the Furious*, an action flick co-starring Vin Diesel, Paul Walker, and Jordana Brewster. Until then, we find him here making a stylish getaway in the sporty 2001 Lincoln LS.

Composer

At first glance, Ed Shearmur's résumé looks like a teenager's Top 10 list (e.g., *Cruel Intentions*, *Miss Congeniality*, and last summer's babe-a-licious *Charlie's Angels*). But his scores for *The Wings of the Dove* and *The Cement Garden*—and stints as music director on Robert Plant and Jimmy Page's recent tour and collaborator on Annie Lennox's *Diva* album—show this classically trained musician's range. Shearmur is seen here in the 2001 Lincoln Navigator, no doubt heading off to another hot project. Next up: a remake of *The Count of Monte Cristo*, and *K-Pax*, a psychological drama starring Kevin Spacey and Jeff Bridges.





THERE'S MORE TALES OF LUXURY

It's impossible to choose one lead performer from this luxury line-up.
Here, these Lincolns take a break from the road at a Hollywood back-lot.

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Those with an incurable passion for excitement will gravitate toward the Lincoln LS. Easily one of the finest cars on the road, the LS comes with a powerful and highly responsive V8 engine, which will perform to your highest expectations. A perfect marriage between man and machine, it keeps the acceleration quick, the handling precise, and the driver at peace.



Actress/Director

Any true fan of David Lynch's *Twin Peaks* fell in love with Joan Chen's hauntingly beautiful Josie. This was, after all, the same beauty who graced *The Last Emperor*. It's easy to see how such a face—suitably framed here in a 2001 Lincoln LS side-view mirror—could inspire such admiration. Chen turned to directing in the mid-90s. Her first feature, *Xiu Xiu: The Sent Down Girl*, won critical acclaim. Most recently, she directed *Autumn in New York*, starring Richard Gere and Winona Ryder, and appeared in *What's Cooking*.



ONTINUED FROM PAGE 236 Cadillac. As we drove down a long lley, we saw Magnani standing beside a Ferrari. She was with ıer son, who was illegitimate and about the same age as Bette's laughter. He had a wonderful Roman head, but as he got out of he car we realized that he was partially paralyzed and had to valk with crutches. He turned out to be very charming.

The restaurant went crazy when Magnani walked in, particularly when she waved her arms and indicated that she had Bette Davis with her. Bette was absolutely amazing that night, and he amused Magnani no end. At one point she said something hat made Magnani scream with laughter. The great Italian actress stopped eating, put her fork down, picked up her plate of paghetti, and dumped it over her own head. She looked like Medusa covered with sauce. The spaghetti was in her hair, round her neck, slipping down into the bodice of her dress. All the people in the restaurant burst into applause. Magnani hen went and got cleaned up, and everyone had a marvelous vening.

I had never seen Bette take to anyone that way, least of ıll to any contemporary of hers in Hollywood. She was very :lose to Olivia de Havilland, but that was because they were ɔoth big stars at Warner Bros. I never saw her be demonstrative with Olivia the way she was with Magnani that night. As ıctresses the two women had similar styles, when you think ɔf it, and they both often played flamboyant, angry women. :t was too bad that they didn't make an effort to remain riends, but to my knowledge they never made contact again.

had to follow. The four of us went to the Bistro for dinner.

I felt guilty, but I had tried to bring Hedda and Bette together before, and I could never succeed. Bette was a Democrat and Hedda was a Republican, and they just did not get along.

The next day I phoned Bette to apologize for our departure, but she wouldn't take my call. I was very upset, but I was also very busy working at Columbia. A week later, I ran into her at a party at Jules Stein's. I walked up and said, "Bette, I have tried—"

"Don't you *dare* speak to me ever again," she snapped, and turned her back on me.

After that I didn't see Bette for several years, until I spotted her in London one day. I found out she was staying at Grosvenor House, and I called her. Again she wouldn't take my call, and I gave up on ever being reconciled with her.

Years passed, and in 1983 Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip came to California. Jim Wharton and I were escorting Irene Dunne and Loretta Young to a party for the royal couple on a soundstage at Twentieth Century Fox. There, in the crowd, I saw Bette, and I was shocked, because she seemed to have shriveled. She had been ill with cancer, and she looked old. I decided to go over and speak to her, and I asked Irene and Loretta if they would go with me. Both of the ladies declined, so I approached her alone. She was talking with someone, and I said, "Bette." She turned and studied me for several seconds, as if she had never seen me before. I said, "Bette, it's Bill Frye." After another long pause, she said, "I know who you are, Bill Frye." She stared me down, turned, and walked away. I never saw her again. □

As she pressed the knife to my chest, Bette repeated, "*What did you say?*"

In November 1963, Bette called me to say that B.D. was getting married at the Episcopal church in Beverly Hills in January. Bette wasn't a religious person, but she was clearly touched and excited. Jim Wharton was a member of the church, so he made arrangements for the wedding to take place in the little chapel, and he even had special music written. He and I were asked to escort Rosalind Russell and Hedda Hopper. We went to Hedda's first and had a glass of champagne before going to the seven-o'clock wedding.

At the church Bette was very much the movie star, in a very attractive, long, dark-blue dress, with nothing on her head. When the minister asked who would give the bride away, Bette stood up and said she would. As she walked down the aisle, you would have thought she was stepping right off the set of *All About Eve*.

After the service, we went to the Beverly Wilshire Hotel for the reception and a supper party. When Roz, Hedda, Jim, and I sat down, the waiter asked what we would like to drink. The women ordered champagne, but the waiter informed us that no champagne would be served until the bride and groom were toasted. No problem, I told him. He could just bring a bottle of champagne and put it on my account. Then Jim and I ordered drinks. As the champagne arrived, Bette appeared, making the rounds to greet her guests. She noticed the bottle of champagne and demanded to know where it had come from. I said, "I just ordered it."

She said, "There is to be no champagne until the toasts are made, do you understand?" And with that she turned and walked away.

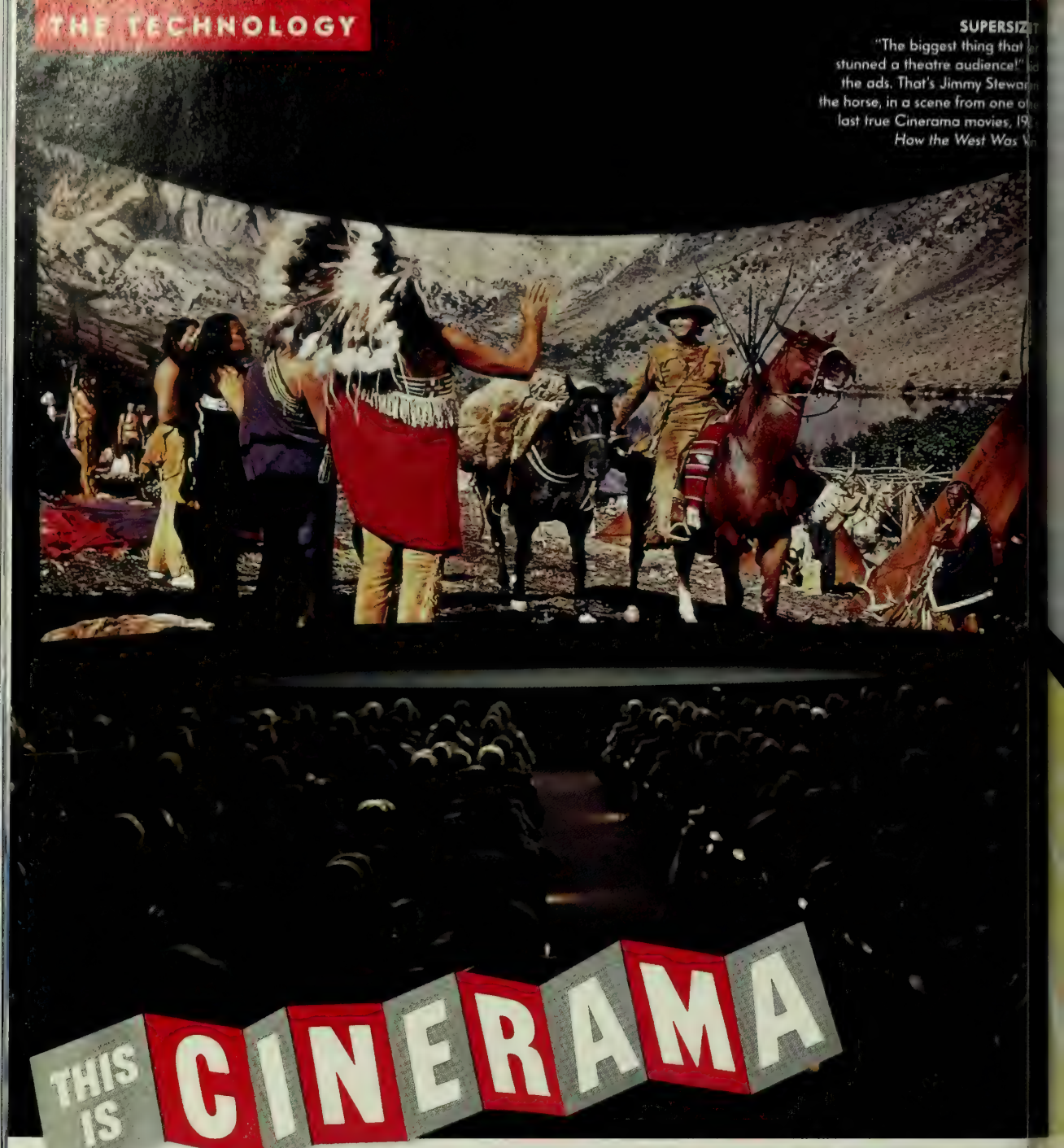
Hedda said, "Well, I've had enough of *that*."

"Me too," said Roz.

They got up, and Jim and I realized that we



THE WINNER IS ... Oscar party, 1963: Patty Duke won best supporting actress for *The Miracle Worker*; Davis lost out to Anne Bancroft.



SUPERSIZ
"The biggest thing that
stunned a theatre audience!"
the ads. That's Jimmy Stewa
the horse, in a scene from one o
last true Cinerama movies, 19
How the West Was

THIS IS CINERAMA

The 1952 debut of Cinerama made headlines and dazzled audiences, who had never seen movies so big. Ten years later the unwieldy process was on its way to the scrap heap. Now a dedicated band of fanatics is fighting long odds to preserve the last remnants of the panoramic screen format—with the help of Microsoft billionaire Paul Allen

BY BRUCE HANDY

I am *big. It's the pictures that got small.*
—Gloria Swanson as Norma Desmond, i
Sunset Boulevar

It is one thing to fall in love with movie
Everyone falls in love with movies. Sin
ing boat plus Leonardo DiCaprio equa
tens of millions of rapt and tearfu
teenage girls who for the rest of their live
will have an unlikely soft spot for Jam
Cameron. Falling in love: that's wha
movies—still the most seductive mediu
ever invented—are here for.

It's another thing, a far more rarefied an

Beauty

Potent. Maximum ingredient levels with minimum preservatives. Advanced and effective.

Pure. Mono dose packaging seals out light, air and bacteria. Hygienic and fresh.

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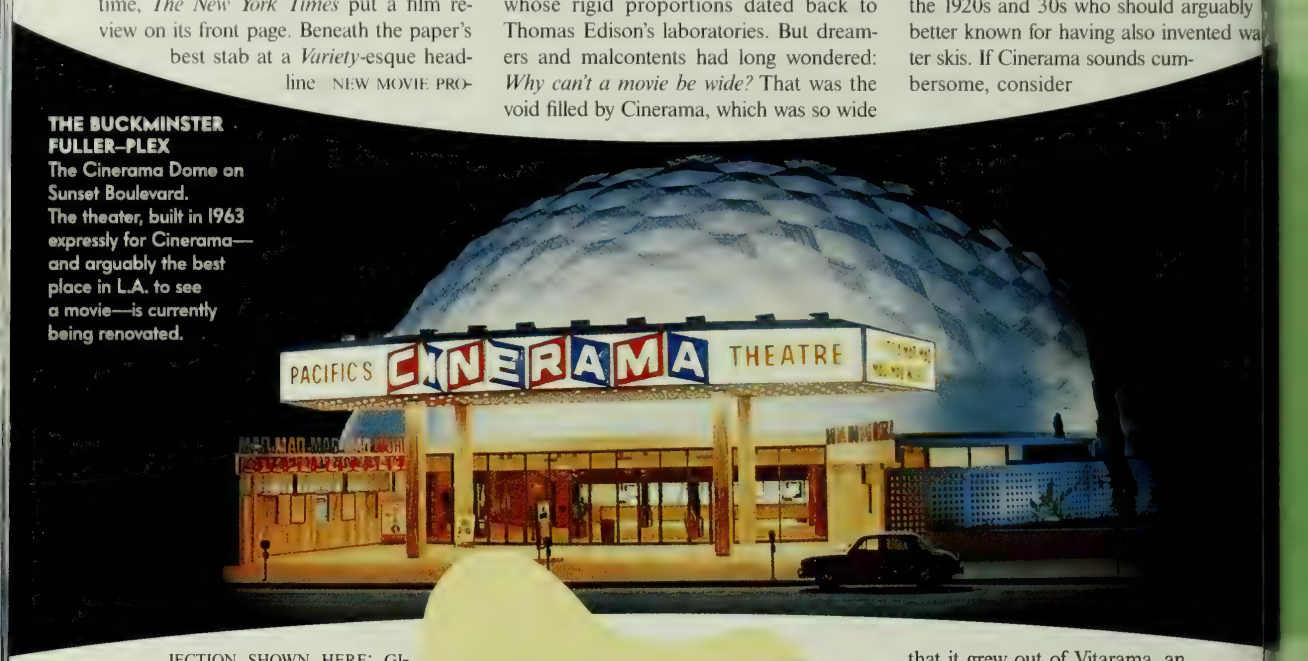
[illegible] a nobler thing, certainly an odder thing, to fall in love with a movie process. Even if that movie process is both magnificent and malformed, if it is both the Cadillac and the Trabant of movie processes—if it is, in fact, Cinerama—the infatuation can be heartbreaking. Marriages have been imperiled, homes literally broken, small and large fortunes squandered, all in the belief that Cinerama must not perish from this earth.

You don't remember Cinerama? Its unveiling in 1952 was so newsworthy that for what must have been the first (and last) time, *The New York Times* put a film review on its front page. Beneath the paper's best stab at a *Variety*-esque headline NEW MOVIE PROJECTION SHOWN HERE; GIANT WIDE ANGLE SCREEN UTILIZED—the movie critic Bosley Crowther wrote: "The new motion-picture projection system known as Cinerama was put on public display for the first time last night before an invited audience at the Broadway Theatre. And, with due account for the novelty of the system, it was evident that the distinguished gathering was as excited and thrilled by the spectacle presented as if it were seeing motion pictures for the first time." This was not an audience of rubes: in it were such presumably tough customers as William Paley, the founder of CBS; David Sarnoff, the longtime head of RCA and NBC; Louis B. Mayer, the former head of MGM; Richard Rodgers, the composer of *Oklahoma!* and *South Pacific;* and Tom Dewey, the governor of New York and former presidential candidate. Also present was Arthur Sulzberger, the publisher of the *Times,* who in one telling had been so awed by Cinerama that he bolted from his seat and dashed to the paper's nearby offices, where he alerted his editors to the filmic marvel in their midst. Ed Sullivan, so flummoxed by Cinerama's stupendousness that he was reduced to using a then current cliché, wrote in his *Daily News* column that it was the biggest thing to hit New York since penicillin.

To appreciate Cinerama's impact, you have to remember that from their infancy, with very few exceptions, movies had been shot and shown in a virtually square format; even the bosom-heaving Technicolor spectacle that was *Gone with the Wind* had been corseted within a frame whose rigid proportions dated back to Thomas Edison's laboratories. But dreamers and malcontents had long wondered: *Why can't a movie be wide?* That was the void filled by Cinerama, which was so wide it had to be shot by three yoked-together cameras and shown by three synchronized projectors, their images blended to fill a vast, deeply curved, panoramic screen that was nearly three times as wide as it was tall. The soundtrack was wide, too, recorded in seven-channel stereo, something almost literally unheard of in a monophonic era. (Two-channel stereo recordings wouldn't become common for another five years.) But to speak of Cinerama in terms of mere wideness is reductive: if movies had always been larger-than-life, Cinerama was *larger* than larger-than-life, in its d[illegible] the closest thing to what the critic And[illegible] Bazin famously called the "myth of [illegible]tal cinema," the impossible goal of a p[illegible]fect simulacrum at once as literal and [illegible] dreamlike as real life itself. Not that Ci[illegible]rama's marketing people needed that high[illegible]lutin *Cahiers du Cinéma* stuff. "The bigg[illegible] thing that ever stunned a theatre au[illegible]ence!" read the ad for its public premie[illegible] making Cinerama sound like a cross b[illegible]tween King Kong and a punch in the no[illegible]

The process was invented by Fred Wall[illegible] a special-effects technician for Paramount [illegible] the 1920s and 30s who should arguably [illegible] better known for having also invented wa[illegible]ter skis. If Cinerama sounds cumbersome, consider that it grew out of Vitarama, an aborted 11-camera system Waller had d[illegible] signed for the 1939 New York World's Fa[illegible] But despite being backed in the 194[illegible] by the likes of Laurence Rockefeller an[illegible] Henry Luce, Cinerama didn't get off th[illegible] ground until it was taken up in 1950 b[illegible] Lowell Thomas, a well-known adventur[illegible] and radio newscaster, and Mike Todd, th[illegible] legendary Broadway showman (and, late[illegible] Elizabeth Taylor's third husband). Alon[illegible] with Merian C. Cooper, the writer, directo[illegible] and producer of *King Kong,* Thomas an[illegible] Todd produced the first Cinerama featur[illegible] In another early triumph of marketing ov[illegible] poetry, it was entitled *This Is Cinerama*[illegible] the picture that so enthralled that audienc[illegible] of New York swells.

The film began on a conventional squa[illegible] ish screen with a deliberately ploddin[illegible] black-and-white prologue in which Thoma[illegible] offered a 12-minute lecture on the histor[illegible] of the moving image (" . . . and out of th[illegible] scientific study came a toy they called th[illegible] zoetrope . . . "). Finally, with audienc[illegible] members probably wishing there had bee[illegible] multiplexes in those days so they coul[illegible]



THE BUCKMINSTER FULLER–PLEX
The Cinerama Dome on Sunset Boulevard. The theater, built in 1963 expressly for Cinerama—and arguably the best place in L.A. to see a movie—is currently being renovated.

Dreamers and malcontents had long wondered: Why can't a movie be wide? That was the void filled by Cinerama.



Soothe

Advanced bio-plant concentrations immediately help calm redness and irritability.

Soothing Concentrate Face · Soothing Lotion Face
Soothing Cream Face · Soothing Mask Face



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Be bullish



VFMH41

...ent sneak into a Jane Russell picture. ...ally got to the point: "The pictures you are now going to see have no plot, they have no stars. . . . Ladies and gentlemen, this is Cinerama!" It was a brilliant stroke of showmanship. As the curtains slowly parted to reveal the rest of the huge, engulfing screen, the film cut to what has been called the most famous point-of-view shot in history, taken by the bulky, three-eyed camera as it was lashed to the front seat of a roller coaster.

This was virtual reality 1950s-style. Audience members, their fields of vision nearly filled by the image, felt as if they too were rushing down the track. People would scream, rock back and forth in their seats, and, if we are to believe press accounts of the day (no doubt informed by ballyhoo), leave the theater at intermission to buy Dramamine. This, anyway, was what the people in the good seats would do; if you were too far back or off to the side, the immersion effect didn't really work. But even though the rest of the film was an ungainly combination of demo reel and travelogue—highlights included a transcendently boring serenade by the Vienna Boys' Choir, a visit to a hokey water-ski show in Florida, and a climactic aerial tour of America's scenic wonders, accompanied on the soundtrack by the Salt Lake City Tabernacle Choir (that last sequence reportedly brought tears to President Eisenhower's eyes)—and even though it would play at a total of only 14 expensively converted theaters during its initial two-year run in the U.S., *This Is Cinerama,* by *The Hollywood Reporter*'s accounting, was the highest-grossing film released in 1952. It bettered the likes of *High Noon, Singin' in the Rain,* and *The Quiet Man.* Being among the new media of its day, Cinerama also spawned a hot stock issue until—this too will sound familiar—people began to look at the numbers and wonder whether anyone could actually profit from the capital-intensive system.

Nevertheless, in an era when audiences were abandoning movie theaters for the novelty of television, Hollywood was desperate for gimmicks. The 3-D craze began two months after *This Is Cinerama*'s premiere with the release of *Bwana Devil.* While that fad would die out within a year, *This Is Cinerama* would change movies forever—"the greatest invention since talking pictures," as the ads not all that preposterously claimed. It wasn't just that widescreen became an industry standard, or that *This Is Cinerama* launched an era of oversize, overstuffed superspectaculars that would give us *Ben-Hur, Spartacus,* and *Lawrence of Arabia* (as well as *Barabbas* and *Cleopatra*). Cinerama restored a visceralness to moviegoing that had been largely missing since the nickelodeon, where novice film audiences would flinch at the sight of waves or a man pointing a gun at the camera. As the film historian John Belton argues in his definitive *Widescreen Cinema,* there is also a direct link between Cinerama and the "roller-coaster ride" movies of George Lucas, Steven Spielberg, and their many disciples, between the opening shot of *This Is Cinerama* and Luke Skywalker's dizzying joyride through the canyons of the Death Star. If, say, you ducked during the cannonball decapitation scene in last summer's *The Patriot,* you too have felt a distant reverberation of the jolt experienced by David Sarnoff and William Paley at that 1952 premiere.

People would scream, rock back and forth in their seats, and leave the theater at intermission to buy Dramamine.

But, as is often the case with revolutions, Cinerama would be deposed in turn, supplanted by cheaper and less clumsy wide-screen processes—Twentieth Century Fox's CinemaScope, Paramount's VistaVision, and the independently owned Todd-AO (dreamed up by Mike Todd after he split with Cinerama). All of these were single-projector, or "one strip," processes, and thus didn't demand as much from either filmmakers or theater owners.* In the end, only seven "three strip" Cinerama movies would ever be shot—eight if you count a film that was shot in the rival but compatible Cinemiracle process, later bought out by Cinerama, Inc. Eight and a half if you count a 10-minute ad shot in Cinerama by the French car company Renault in 1959. By the mid-60s, for all intents and purposes, the process was dead; by the 70s, even the bones had disappeared. Prints were scarce, the unique equipment needed to show them even scarcer—Cinerama had indeed perished from the face of the earth. You simply couldn't see it, a sad end for a medium that had reshaped the movies.

And then, in the late 80s, among the sorts of moviegoers who would park their children in a kennel, if need be, to catch a screening of the lost nine-hour version of Erich von Stroheim's *Greed,* there began to be *Field of Dreams*–like rumors about a Cinerama-obsessed man who, it was said, lived in a modest ranch house somewhere in the Midwest and had ripped out walls, floors, and ceiling to build the world's only Cinerama screening room in his living room, complete with humongous curved screen and requisite three projectors. A film curator told me the story in 1990, but in those days, before the Internet, lone Cinerama obsessives were difficult to track down, and I had assumed the home-Cinerama tale was a movie geek's version of an urban legend. But it wasn't. A small band of people—and they all seem to be men—had dedicated themselves to bringing Cinerama back to life. They traded scraps of lore and know-how, scavenged pieces of equipment, stray reels of film, old blueprints, memorabilia. They were like characters in a bad science-fiction allegory, survivors of a nuclear holocaust, trying to divine the whole of Homer and Shakespeare from a few stray pages of text. In their own way, in their fierce dedication to something that the rest of the world thinks of as some goofy relic of the 50s—if, that is, the rest of the world thinks about Cinerama at all—in their efforts to keep it from becoming another lost American art form, like those backwater crafts you're always hearing about on NPR, the Cinerama guys were heroes. Thanks to their efforts, Cinerama lives again. I can't say I fell in love with it, but I have to admit I sort of fell in love with them.

Lowell Thomas, who died in 1981, was the original Cinerama guy. After *This Is Cinerama* he went on to produce two more Cinerama travelogues: *Seven Wonders of the World* (1956) and *Search for Paradise* (1957). Even as Cinerama prints and equipment became landfill fodder in the 1970s, he never lost the faith. In his 1977 autobiography Thomas swore up and down that Cinerama was still a hundred million dollar bonanza awaiting an entrepreneur of vision and imagination—this has always been the rub with Cinerama—"a sizeable bankroll." Gunther Jung, who back in the day worked for

**Somewhat dry, technical footnote:* By way of comparison, a Cinerama screen had a width-to-height "aspect ratio" of 2.70 to 1; CinemaScope, its main rival, was a shade narrower at 2.55 to 1. The so-called Academy ratio, in which most films were shot up to 1953, was 1.33 to 1. Today's feature films typically have aspect ratios of either 2.35 to 1 or 1.85 to 1. (All these numbers can vary slightly, depending on the theater.) In terms of sheer bigness, Imax comes close to and may even surpass Cinerama's impact, but as people who care about these things love to point out, Imax's aspect ratio is nearly square, meaning, in terms of what the eye can take in, there's wasted space at the bottom of the screen.



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[illegible] as a technician, remembers [illegible] Thomas would sometimes stop by the old studio in Hollywood, before it was bought by a Korean Presbyterian church in 1978 and most of its contents "literally sold off by the pound." Thomas would ask to have one or another of the old Cinerama titles run, seating himself in the front row, basking alone in the big curved screen. "His wife," says Jung, "told me they would go and see things like *Jaws* and *2001,* and all he could talk about the whole way home was: Oh, if they only filmed that in real Cinerama, boy, the scene with the whatever would have been great. He used to ramble on like that."

Gunther Jung has the amiably cynical nature of a man whose passion for film hasn't been totally bled out of him by his more than 50 years in the business. He is, you might say, Cinerama's equivalent of the von Stroheim butler character in *Sunset Boulevard,* tending to the process's dusty legacy as a consultant to Pacific Theatres, the West Coast company that owns the corporate husk of Cinerama. During a tour of the Los Angeles warehouse where the negatives to the Cinerama films are unceremoniously stored alongside those of *Fall Guy* episodes, Jung recounted my single favorite piece of Cinerama lore. Shamed by Cinerama's triumphant appearances at a couple of mid-50s international expositions, the Soviet Union "invented" its own three-strip process, Kinopanorama, whose titles included *Great Is My Country, The Volga Flows On,* and *The Trial of Madmen.* Jung sat through most of these classics when, in an early example of détente, Kinopanorama highlights were spliced together for American audiences as *Cinerama's Russian Adventure* (1966). "They made one about whaling," he remembers, "which is the bloodiest damn thing you'd ever want to see. Can you imagine a wide, panoramic view of a whale with its guts being cut out?" That's the one I'd park my kids in a kennel to see.

If you take people who are obsessed with Cinerama as a type, they tend to have worked in the movie business for years and to care deeply about the way movies are made and how they are projected, about the fine old values and craft of showmanship, about the physical, perishable stuff of film itself. Cinerama guys hate multiplexes, hate small screens, hate sloppy projectionists, hate the fact that studios couldn't care less about all this, because they just want to dump pictures into as many theaters as possible and take the money and run.



CONVOY! The Cinerama fleet spreads the wide-screen word as audiences thrill to the 50s' best stab at virtual reality.

"They made one about whaling. . . . Can you imagine a wide, panoramic view of a whale with its guts being cut out?"

What Cinerama guys hate most of all is that moviegoing has become as bland and workaday as shopping at the Gap—instead of what it was during Cinerama's heyday, which was an event. You could call them cranks, or you could call them men of discernment and sensibility.

Dave Strohmaier, 51, is a film and television editor who lives in the San Fernando Valley, along with most of the other people who do Hollywood's hard labor. One night four years ago, in what he describes with hindsight as a midlife crisis, he had a brainstorm: even though he had no previous experience, he would direct and produce a documentary on Cinerama, whi[ch] he had seen as a kid growing up in t[he] Midwest in the 50s. He retained an abi[ding] affection for the system and didn't u[n]derstand why no one else, even most fil[m] historians, remembered or cared. Th[at] was the wrong he set out to right. H[e] told his wife he thought the documenta[ry] would cost them $35,000 or so. Mo[re] than 50 interviews and $108,000 lat[er] he's still at it, his wife is still driving [a] 1983 station wagon, and there's no gua[r]antee that the finished film will ever s[ee] the light of day, though judging from [a] rough cut he showed me it will be super[b] full of humor, drama, and genuine pa[th]os, a surprisingly human tale.

As was the case with Lowell Thomas, Strohmaier's faith in Cinerama's pow[er] to fascinate does not wane. "What's s[o] amazing about Cinerama," he says, "[is] that the movies weren't all that goo[d] but everyone's so passionate about it."

John Harvey is the name of the ma[n] who tore his house apart to build a Ci[n]erama screening room. It turns out this [is] not an altogether uncommon occurrenc[e]. There is a fellow in England who also p[uts] up a Cinerama screen in his living roo[m] though he doesn't have any projector. There is an Australian whose garage do[u]bles as a Cinerama projection booth; h[is] screen is in his backyard.

But John Harvey was the first. He [is] 64, and would look a little bit like Wa[lt] Disney if Walt Disney had dressed like [a] shop teacher. Harvey has spent his profe[s]sional life in the hardware end of th[e] movie-exhibition business and has th[e] good-humored but no-nonsense demeano[r] of someone who, in essence, tinkers for [a] living. He sometimes seems to harbor a[n] underlying impatience with the world which may come from years and years



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[illegible] Cinerama—why?"

Harvey was already a budding projectionist when, at the age of 16, his family drove the 49 miles from their home in Dayton to see *This Is Cinerama* at the Capitol Theater in Cincinnati. "I never saw anything so impressive," he says simply, a man not given to verbal rhapsody. He went back to see *This Is Cinerama* again and again, intrigued as much by the staggering complexities of the three-projector system, which to his mind had a kind of watchwork beauty, as by the film itself.

In 1963, Cinerama finally made it to third-tier cities such as Dayton with the release of *How the West Was Won,* the first Cinerama feature with movie stars and one which Harvey, by then a working professional, had the honor of projecting. "All these things were happening," he says, meaning things Cineramic, "and I was in the middle of it." Unfortunately, this would prove to be the dawn before the darkness.

From the beginning there were questions about Cinerama's long-term viability. As the *New York Herald Tribune* cautioned in its otherwise rave review of *This Is Cinerama,* "This device has yet to show whether it can deal as acutely with people as with mountain ranges, whether it has pliability as well as size and can adapt to intimacy as well as grandeur." Mike Todd Jr., who shot some of the sequences for *This Is Cinerama,* remembers his father's habitual complaint about the medium: "Sometime, someway, you're going to want to do a love story, and the seams are going to get in the way of the guy saying, 'I love you.'"

The seams: Waller had never found a perfect way to blend the images of the three projectors. Where the "panels" met there were overlaps, dividing the screen in thirds with a distracting flicker or "wiggle" along the joint lines. Another Cineramic peculiarity that filmmakers had to compensate for was the extreme wide angle of the camera's three lenses, which was necessary in order to capture a contiguous image. The lenses were great for shooting the Grand Canyon, but more problematic when trained on people. Due to the unusual optics, close-ups—the bread and butter of feature-film making—were both difficult to shoot and ill-advised in Cinerama. There is, for instance, a scene featuring Debbie Reynolds in *How the West Was Won* in which her nose looks like Jake LaMotta's.

And yet, after having fed audiences a steady diet of travelogues, most of which performed well at the box office but likely didn't turn much profit (owing to the expense of both production and exhibition as well as Cinerama, Inc.'s sometimes sloppy business dealings), Cinerama needed to start seeing other people, as it were. In 1960 the company had struck a deal with MGM to co-produce Cinerama's first narrative features—*How the West Was Won* and *The Wonderful World of the Brothers Grimm.* In accommodating Hollywood-style moviemaking, however, the process's limitations proved even more onerous. Actors had to stare over their co-stars' shoulders in order for it to appear as if they were actually looking at each other. They also had to inure themselves to performing with an 800-pound three-eyed camera gaping at them from a mere 18 inches away, the closeness necessary to capture just a medium shot. Art directors constructed vast sets to fill the camera's omnivorous

Gregory Peck had a nipple erection under his shirt, and in Cinerama that's a nipple erection the size of your fist.

view—as one actor would later recall, "Every time you moved the camera 10 feet, you had to dress another 200 acres." Sound technicians had difficulties placing microphones so that they would be out of view but still near enough to pick up dialogue—a problem that sent John Ford, one of three credited directors on *How the West Was Won,* into rages.

That film would prove to be a cinematically spectacular but dramatically inert affair, something akin to a three-hour *Bonanza* episode with great scenery, astonishing production values, scary stunts, and just about every male star of the era, including Jimmy Stewart, John Wayne, Henry Fonda, Gregory Peck, Karl Malden, Richard Widmark, George Peppard, Eli Wallach, and Spencer Tracy, along with Debbie Reynolds, Carroll Baker, Thelma Ritter, and, as one critic noted, "by my count, 16,548 maddened buffalo." With the novelty of 1952 long since worn off, opinions had become decidedly less gaga. "There's still a good deal of distortion in the Cinerama process," wrote Brendan Gill in *The New Yorker,* "so if you're determined to go and fight river pirates and be shot at by Sioux, be sure to do so from an ophthalmologically comfortable seat in the house." On the other hand, *Time* noted sympathetically that "the troublesome match-lines . . . have been masked by photographers clever at lining up the joinings with telegraph poles, cabin corns and lonesome pines." *How the West W Won* went on to become the highest-grossg film of 1962, taking in nearly $21 milli though with an enormous budget of $5 million (at the time, the third-highest MGM history, in constant dollars, behi *Gone with the Wind* and *Ben-Hur*), it n have actually lost money after market costs and the theaters' takes were factor in. Meanwhile, *The Wonderful World of Brothers Grimm,* starring the likes of R Tamblyn and Buddy Hackett, was an o right dud. It is probably best remember as the film that proved that telling a st with stop-motion puppet animation does make sense in an unforgiving medium m suited for bolting a camera to the front s of a bobsled or in the nose of a B-25 tha then sent flying over one scenic wonder ter another.

Cinerama guys always argue th the process never should ha been used for narrative moviem ing. As a former Cinerama crew memb says in Dave Strohmaier's documenta "It hit you right in the gut. That was great virtue, and that's, of course, great flaw. [It's] too visceral, too mu horsepower, to make a feature." H ing seen Cinerama presentations both *This Is Cinerama* and *How West Was Won,* and bits and pie of a few other films, I would have agree. The actual images were as vast a overwhelming as advertised, and also m merizing—there's an oddly pleasant sen tion of surrendering yourself to the scre as if it were a hot bath; and even the dull sequences afford a kind of meditative joyment. The travelogues also have poignant time-capsule quality, especia in the glimpses of bystanders, who oft gawk straight at the camera—they look *alive* in Cinerama, and yet in real life, p sumably, most of them are so dead. It's l stumbling on an old home video of Gra ma, one where she's now three stories tall

But in a narrative feature, in scenes volving actors, dialogue, plot, and wh not, Cinerama's wealth of visual inform tion becomes a distraction. In what wou be a simple two-shot in a normal mov Cinerama gives you acres and acres overly articulated scenery on either side the actors, or, in more populated scenes frieze-like tableau stocked with a dozen traneous actors who you can see, as yo eyes wander the screen, are trying to figu out what they should do with their hand

It's not just the bigness. Because of t combined negative size of Cinerama film roughly six times that of a single strip conventional 35-mm. film—the pictures screen have unusual depth and clarity. T





PERRY ELLIS







...screenings. He tracked down a couple ... Kansas City who had been featured as young newlywed vacationers in *Cinerama Holiday*; and they came, too (although they were now divorced).

Cinerama lived. "It was handkerchief time," says Gunther Jung, a man not typically given to sentimentality.

In 1996, Harvey was persuaded to install his Cinerama projectors in the Neon Movies, downtown Dayton's lone art house, and build a screen there even larger than the one in his house. He and Larry Smith, one of the theater's co-owners, did most of the construction themselves, putting in the screen and three new projection booths with the help of friends and Harvey's eightysomething former shop teacher. One could no doubt debate for an eternity the question of how many people in greater Dayton and the world at large would pay to see a faded-to-pink print of *Cinerama Holiday*—Quentin Tarantino, for one, made a pilgrimage from Hollywood—but last May, after four years of well-attended screenings, Smith's partners at the Neon finally forced him to deinstall Cinerama. After making inquiries about acquiring a Cinerama site in Branson, Missouri—the tourist destination known as the Las Vegas of the Midwest, where Andy Williams and Tony Orlando have their own theaters—Harvey is now looking at helping to restore a former Cinerama theater in Omaha.

Meanwhile, the focus of the Cinerama community has shifted to Washington State, where Paul Allen, the billionaire co-founder of Microsoft, enters the story as a kind of deus ex machina. In 1998 he was buying some DVDs in a Seattle video store when he was asked to sign a petition to save the Seattle Cinerama Theater, which was then slated for demolition. As the name implies, the theater was designed expressly for Cinerama; like the Cinerama Dome in Hollywood, it is a relic of the early 60s, when Cinerama, Inc., was going through an expansive, unduly optimistic phase. Allen not only signed the petition; the next day he bought the theater, which he has had renovated in meticulous fashion as both a state-of-the-art showplace for contemporary movies and a temple of Cineramiana, complete with brand-new curved screen and three rebuilt Cinerama projectors (salvaged from a Peruvian theater by way of a Miami dealer in theatrical scrap). This past June, in association with the Seattle Film Festival, the theater had its first Cinerama screening, borrowing Harvey's prints for a packed one-day marathon of *This Is Cinerama* and *How the West Was Won.*

The key issue, if Cinerama is to have any future, will be the availability of new prints. Harvey's are already well into their ninth life and won't remain in showable condition forever; there are a few others scattered around the world in similar condition. The original negatives are deteriorating, too, though they are eminently salvageable—someone just needs to throw a bunch of money at the problem (restoring a Cinerama film, as you might guess, is at least three times as expensive as restoring a comparable normal movie). Pacific Theatres, which owns all the films except for the two MGM features (which are now controlled by Warner Bros.), has shown intermittent interest in Cinerama, and is currently investing about $150,000 in striking a new print of *This Is Cinerama.* Restoration work is also being done on that film's negative, but the fate of the other features remains uncertain. By some accounts, Pacific Theatres tends to view the process warily, seeing it not only as an important part of movie history, but also as something that lost people a lot of money in the 50s and 60s.

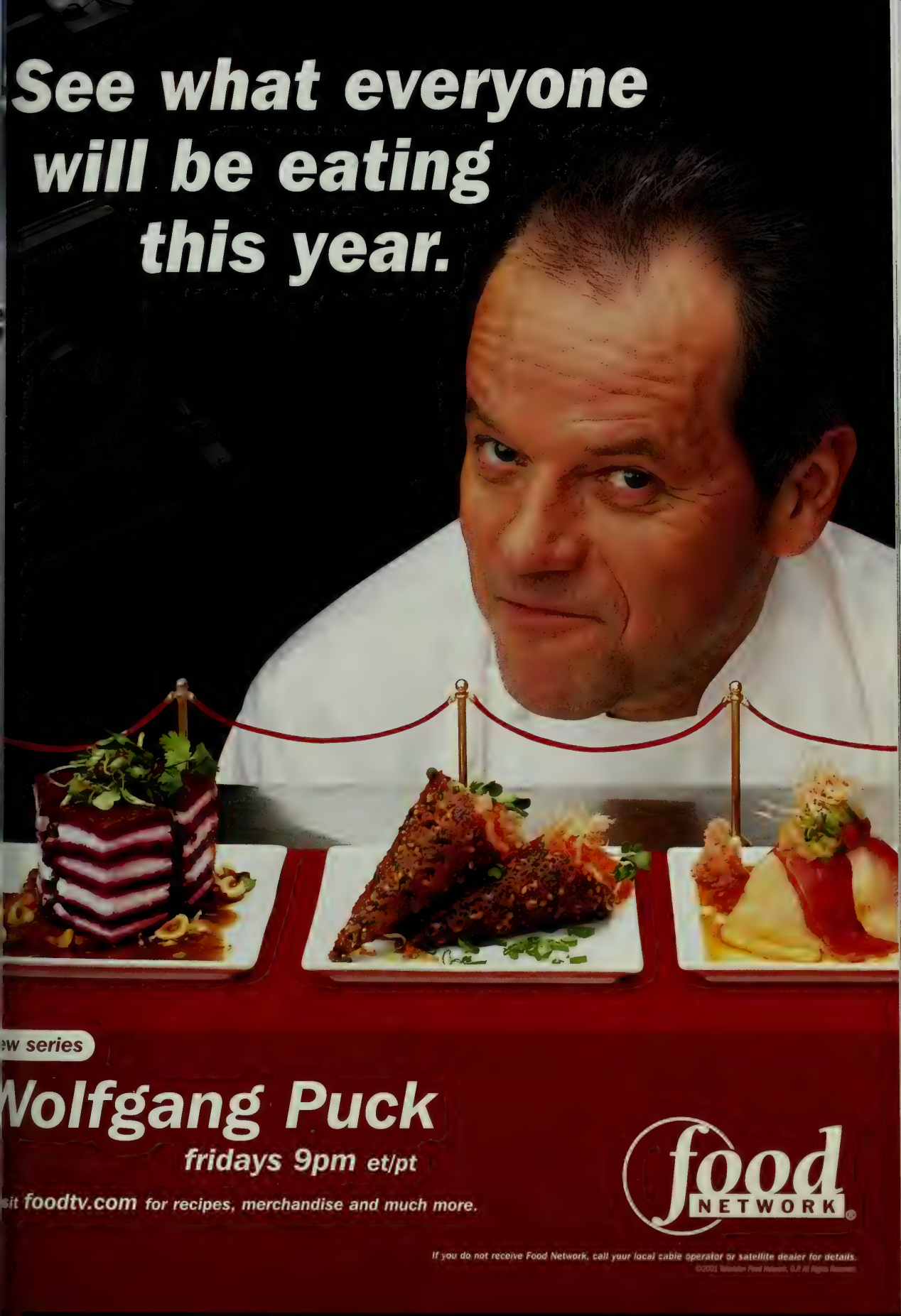
Accommodating the screen meant knocking out a key support beam. "Let the house fall down," he said. "I want Cinerama."

So who else has both ready cash and a demonstrated willingness to lavish it on the sorts of enthusiasms most people outgrow by the age of 25 or so? As it happens, the Experience Music Project, the $240 million rock 'n' roll museum and Jimi Hendrix shrine that Paul Allen funded, is just down the street from the Cinerama theater and opened two weeks after the film festival. At the screenings, which were sort of a Cinerama-guy convention, a place where the words "Hey, guys—I met Lowell" were a conversation stopper, the billionaire was a phantom but deeply felt presence. The hope had been that he would turn up for one of the shows and be so impressed by the process—no one seems to know whether the elusive mogul has ever actually seen three-strip Cinerama—that he would cut a check for new prints on the spot. There was some sotto voce grumbling about the perversity of someone who would blow millions on a Cinerama installation without making the comparatively minor investment for some films to run on it. It was as if, minus a few zeros, Allen had bought a high-end stereo system but balked at t... price of a few CDs. Then again, if billi... aires thought like normal people, they'd ... thousandaires.

Anyway, it turned out that the Portla... Trail Blazers, the professional basketb... team that Allen owns, had a playoff ga... that night, so he was otherwise dispos... The Cinerama guys were crestfallen; the... been pointing toward this event, a... Allen's possible saviorship, for months. ... spokesperson has subsequently said t... Allen is "interested in taking a leadersh... role" in preserving the films—and his ... sence that day may even have been a go... thing, for the Seattle screenings demo... strated the unique headaches involved ... projecting Cinerama. There were ongo... problems aligning the right panel (if a p... jector is even a fraction of a millimeter ... it looks as if someone dragged a kn... across the screen), and at one point t... same projector's film broke, necessitati... a long delay. (Three reels of film p... the soundtrack, which in Cinerama ru... on a separate reel, had to be resynch... nized.) What Liszt's notoriously diffic... *Transcendental Etudes* are for pianis... what a triple Axel is for figure skate... Cinerama is for projectionists—a m... dening though exhilarating disciplin...

The show was being run from th... separate booths by John Harv... Larry Smith, and Gunther Ju... with Dave Strohmaier also on hand ... backup. No one was doing this for mon... or not much, anyway. They had work... through the preceding night until five ... the morning, tweaking the projection s... tem and trying to get everything just ... an aggravating process for which th... weeks would have been allowed in t... good old days of Cinerama conversio... At one point during the delay I poked ... head into one of the booths, and the fac... looked stricken and exhausted. It was a... these were the Olympic track trials a... Cinerama had just blown a hammy. D... Strohmaier had told me numerous tim... that he half believes in a "Cinerama curs... and at the moment it was hard not ... think that might be so.

But the guys eventually got it go... again, and by the end of the day, for t... second showing of *How the West W... Won,* the whole thing went off withou... hitch—a miracle. The irony in all this w... that the projectionists were too busy ... much enjoy the show. From their limit... vantage points inside the left and rig... booths, Jung and Smith, a bit like B... thoven writing his late symphonies, could... even take in the enormity of the art fo... they had labored so hard to resurrect. ... then, love's like that. □


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THE PARTY'S OVER
Aerial view of the Polanski house on Cielo Drive in Benedict Canyon two months after the murderous rampage, 1969. Inset, Roman Polanski and Sharon Tate in Cannes, France, one year earlier.

Murder Most Unforgettable

Recuperating from over-radiation, the author found himself drawn back into one of his past's grimmest chapters: August 1969, when Hollywood learned of the murders of actress Sharon Tate, celebrity hairstylist Jay Sebring, and three others by the Charles Manson family—a crime that changed the town forever

Rudolph Giuliani had better luck with his radiation than I did. Mine turned out to be a disaster. I got over-radiated in a private area and suffered terrible pain—three weeks of it. They don't warn you about the pain. As a result, I've been staying home nights until things clear up, and to my amazement I'm enjoying the quiet life. What with the Internet and the fax and the telephone, I'm always up-to-date on the kind of news that interests me—for instance, what's happening with the Edmond Safra death and the Michael Skakel trial and why Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman are breaking up. I watched videos of all the Oscar-eligible movies and sent in my ballot to the Academy. You're not supposed to tell how you voted, so I won't. One night in January, as I was channel surfing, I came across a two-hour documentary about the 1969 murder of the actress Sharon Tate and four other people by the so-called Charles Manson family on the E! channel. Oh, God, I don't want to watch that, I thought. I didn't want to dig up those awful memories. But I couldn't bring myself to change channels, and for one whole part of the program I just stood there in fro of the set, transfixed, too engrossed even to sit down.

Anyone who was living in Beverly Hills on August 9, 1969, who was part of the motion-picture world, remembers vividly th Saturday morning, when the news began to filter out that the had been a murderous rampage on Cielo Drive at the home of t film director Roman Polanski. Telephones started to ring all ov the community. My brother and sister-in-law the writers John Gre ory Dunne and Joan Didion recently reminded me that they h been at the home of my wife, Lenny, from whom I had recent separated, when she got the call from Natalie Wood about t brutal slaying of our friends Sharon Tate and Jay Sebring. Natal always had the latest news ahead of everyone else, but this kind news was out of the ordinary. The immediate interpretation, on the shock of the mass murder had set in, was that the huge par we had all been living was over. Suddenly everyone felt unsafe.

"We used to think, Drugs aren't bad, life is great—but it ended that day," says George Hamilton on the telephone fro Los Angeles. George was in Palm Springs when he heard. H



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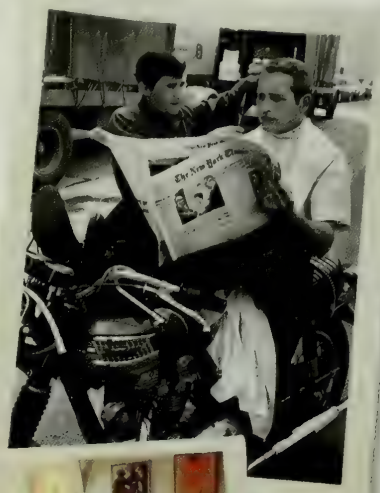
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was with Joan Collins, whom he would soon marry, and Peter [illegible]. "Everyone felt personally involved," he recalls, because [illegible] people from all walks of life had passed though the [illegible] on Cielo Drive in the short time that Roman and Sharon lived there. "Roman brought a dark energy to the house," George says. For the next four months, until the Manson family was arrested, there was fear in the air. Who was going to be next?

"We were all running around with guns in our purses," Michelle Phillips of the Mamas and the Papas tells me. "We all suspected *each other.* It was the most bizarre period of my life. I didn't trust anyone. It could have been anyone, as far as I was concerned. The last conversation I ever had with Sharon was about wallpaper for her nursery. Do you remember Peter Hurkos, the psychic? He put his hand on my stomach and said, 'You have to carry a gun at all times, loaded and cocked.' I carried one for three months. The police were questioning everyone. Everyone was flushing drugs down the toilet. For some reason, they suspected my husband, John Phillips. 'Would your husband have any reason to have any animosity toward anyone in that house?' they asked me. I told them I had had a night in London with Roman. I felt bad about that, because of Sharon."





L.A. CONFIDENTIAL *Right,* Jay Sebring styles Paul Newman's hair on the set of *Harper,* 1965. *Below,* Peter Hurkos, psychic to the stars, studies the bloody carpet after the murders.

One day during the O. J. Simpson trial, Warren Beatty suggested that I write about the Sharon Tate murders, but for a long time I resisted the idea. As I reminded Warren, the prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi had covered the case thoroughly in his amazing book, *Helter Skelter.* Warren said, "Vince knew the bad guys," meaning the Manson gang. "But you and Lenny knew the movie people. You knew the life they lived. It was the crowd from the Daisy that went in and out of the house on Cielo Drive." He was right. We had known them all. The Daisy was the first of the private discotheques in the city, where the young and the rich twisted and boogied away the nights in a town famous for going to bed early. The skirts were short. The girls were beautiful. The guys were handsome. On any given night, if you managed to get in, which could be difficult, you were apt to see Joan Collins, Michael Caine, Ryan O'Neal, Mia Farrow, Jane Fonda, Warren Beatty, the Sinatra sisters, and maybe a Vegas figure or two. The Polanskis were often there. So was Jay Sebring. You could slip out to the garden in back for a snort or a toke. The smell of pot was often in the air. It sounds absurd to call the scene innocent, but it was. Everybody knew everybody. It was a nightly party, even though plenty of dramas took place there. Frank Sinatra, who had taken a dislike to me, once paid the Daisy's maître d' 50 bucks to hit me. Back then 50 bucks was a lot of money. The place was owned by a glamorous couple named Jack and Sally Hansen, who were very much a part of the scene themselves. They also owned Jax, the wildly successful Beverly Hills shop that changed the cut of women's slacks. One night after the murders, Michelle Phillips was waving a gun around at the bar. Sally Hansen said quietly, "Darling, put the gun away."

There was a lot of gossip. The house on Cielo Drive had gotten a notorious reputation after the Polanskis moved in. From the start, people speculated that drugs had been involved. The police had found drugs in Jay Sebring's black Porsche, which was parked outside the house. People were also saying that there were videotapes of orgies, including one of two famous stars having sex. (Years later, when I was covering the O. J. Simpson trial, I became friends with Vince Bugliosi, who had successfully prosecuted the Manson family, all of whom received life in prison. I asked him about the dirty videos, and he said no such tapes had ever been found.)

At the time of the murders, I was in New York executive-producing the film *The Boys in the Band.* Lenny phoned me with the news, and I flew back to Los Angeles for a few days. People were sending their children out of town for safety, and ours were going to my mother-in-law's ranch outside San Diego. People were buying firearms and attack dogs for protection. Steve McQueen packed a gun at Jay Sebring's funeral, where he gave one of the eulogies. The Tate murders marked the beginning of bodyguards for the famous, and elaborate alarm systems, and high walls and gates.

"My home was on Angelo Drive, right around the corner from Cielo," says Rona Barrett when I telephone her. At that time, Rona was the reigning queen of gossip in Hollywood, a combination of Hedda Hopper and Louella Parsons for the television age. She was a great reporter when she went after a story, but she annoyed a lot of people with her fierce tenacity. Once, I saw Mia Farrow throw a drink in Rona's face at a party at Laurence Harvey's house in Malibu after Rona had said something on the air that Mia didn't like. I remember that Rona handled the situation with grace. Rona was the first reporter to arrive at the Polanski house after word of the murders leaked out. "I got a call saying something bad had happened at Sharon and Roman's house. I got in the car and went. I got up the driveway and into the parking area. I saw a sedan there. There was a dead body behind the steering wheel. Then a whole group of detectives converged on the property. I saw them covering another body on the lawn. Then the police said, 'Please leave.'" There were quickly rumors of a hit list of famous people. "Metromedia gave me a private guard," says Rona.

The body behind the steering wheel was an 18-year-old named Steven Parent. He didn't even know any of the celebrities inside the house. He had driven up to visit the caretaker of the

"We all suspected *each other,*" Michelle Phillips tells me


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[illegible] he was shot and killed by Manson-family member [illegible] Watkins as he was leaving to go home. The body on the lawn that Rona saw being covered was a Polish friend of [illegible]s named Voytek Frykowski. After having been shot and [illegible]ed in the living room, where he was sleeping, he had run outdoors, and there he died of his wounds. He was the lover of the coffee heiress Abigail Folger, known as Gibby, another of the five victims. In an interview, Polanski later said about his childhood friend that he had little talent but that he was a charmer. Frykowski was also involved in drugs. To this day, there are those in the community who firmly believe that the murders were the result of a drug deal gone bad between Voytek Frykowski and Charles Manson.

On a recent trip to Paris, I thought of looking up Roman to see if he would talk about the tragedy from his point of view. He was in a horrible position when he returned from England after the murders. There was probably no more photographed man in the world at that moment than Roman Polanski, returning to a home that was now a crime scene with yellow tape around it after his magnificent wife and their about-to-be-born child had both been slashed to death. His close pals, such as Warren Beatty, Jack Nicholson, and Robert Evans, the glamorous head of Paramount Studios, rallied around him. Since there was no place Roman could go without being besieged by reporters, Evans took him in behind the gates of his French manor house off Coldwater Canyon. He also hung out in Beatty's suite in the Beverly Wilshire hotel and in a place rigged up for him at Paramount Studios. Meanwhile, word spread that the kinds of movies he made, such as *Rosemary's Baby,* had helped create the atmosphere for the catastrophe that had come down on him.

Steve McQueen packed a gun at Jay Sebring's funeral.

Before leaving for Paris, I contacted Bob Evans and Warren Beatty and Jeff Berg, the head of ICM, who is Roman's agent and friend, to see if they would approach Roman about setting up a meeting. Bob Evans and I had recently made up after not speaking for many years, and he confided that he felt funny about calling Roman, because they hadn't been in touch for a while. Then Jeff Berg told me that Roman simply didn't want to talk about the murders ever again. I understood that, because I've had my own version of what happened to him. There comes a time when you just can't discuss it anymore. Although I passed his apartment in Paris, I didn't make any attempt to see him. I knew Roman slightly, but we had never been friends. Sharon was the one who was my friend, and I had met her through Jay Sebring, one of the remarkable Hollywood figures at that time. He was the first celebrity barber, and he became part of the scene. He was also part of Warren Beatty's composite character in the film *Shampoo.*

Jay was a wonderful guy. When he was in a good mood, he could be as funny as anyone I ever knew. I think he had a social hang-up about being a barber, feeling that it put him on a lower step than the crowd he palled around with. He craved acceptance. He lived in the house where Jean Harlow's husband Paul Bern had committed suicide shortly after they were married, and where Hollywood lore has it that Louis B. Mayer, the head of MGM, and Howard Strickling, the chief of publicity, had destroyed his suicide note before the police arrived. Paul Newman and Steve McQueen were Jay's special buddies. They all loved motorcycles. Jay used to get himself up in leather, and an expression of bliss would come over his face when he was gripping the handlebars of his motorcycle. He also drove a Porsche, in which the police found marijuana and cocaine the morning after th murders. The first time I dropped acid, I dropped it with Jay. H brought it over to my house on Walden Drive one time whe Lenny and the kids were at her mother's ranch.

Jay was credited with launching the trend of hairstyling fo men. He was called a hairstylist, never a barber. Practically ever male movie star in town went to him. He brought out his ow line of products. He hired a wigmaker in the San Fernando Va ley named Ziggy Geikke, who turned out some of the best rug in the movie business. Jay had a private room for his stead clients so that they wouldn't have to be seen by the other cu tomers. I had a regular appointment every third week, and it wa in that room that I met Sharon Tate. She would often be sittin there in a chair, just to be with Jay as he worked. She looked s young that I thought at first she was coming there after schoo She wore her blond hair straight and long. She was quiet an friendly and smiled a lot at our conversations. Jay was so prou of her. He couldn't stop looking at her. It was as if he couldn believe he had a girlfriend that beautiful. I've never seen a gu more madly in love than Jay was with Sharon.

Sharon wanted to be an actress in the worst way. God know she was pretty enough, and one day her big break cam She got a part in a picture called *Eye of the Devil,* starrin David Niven and Deborah Kerr, in which she played a Frenc country girl with the powers of a witch. Sharon was ecstatic, an Jay was ecstatic for her. The movie was being shot in England and before Sharon left, we drank champagne in Jay's privat room and wished her well. What none of us knew that day wa that we were seeing the end of Sharon and Jay. In England sh met and fell in love with Roman Polanski, who directed her i *The Fearless Vampire Killers* and co-starred opposite her. Charle Champlin of the *Los Angeles Times* described her as "a visua adornment" to Polanski. Jay was devastated by the turn of event It was painful to see his sadness over losing Sharon.

I lost track of Sharon for a while after that. She made severa films, the most important being *Valley of the Dolls.* In Januar 1968, she and Roman got married at a London registry office When they came back to Beverly Hills, they rented the ram bling ranch-style house at 10050 Cielo Drive. The owner of th house was Rudi Altobelli, a personal manager for film star Terry Melcher, Doris Day's son, had lived there with Candic Bergen before Roman and Sharon. It would soon become a fa mous party house.

One night in 1969, I was at a party at Tony Curtis's. Ton had fantastic taste in art and furnishings. The first Balthu painting I ever saw was in his house. He had two of them In those days he lived in a beautiful Mediterranean villa just o Sunset Boulevard in Holmby Hills. Next to Tony lived Jayn Mansfield, in her pink palace with the heart-shaped swimmin pool. Tony was recently divorced from his second wife, the Ge man film star Christine Kaufmann, and had just married th beautiful model Leslie Allen. His rose garden was lovely. As I re member it all these years later, there were gravel pathways be tween the beds of roses and boxwood borders. At one point tha night, I went out into the garden, and there was Sharon, a alone, walking on a path by the white roses in full bloom. Sh was pregnant, and dressed in something white and billowing. I was like a scene in a movie, watching her. She made me think Daisy Buchanan in *The Great Gatsby.*

Since she had become Mrs. Polanski, I hadn't seen her as muc


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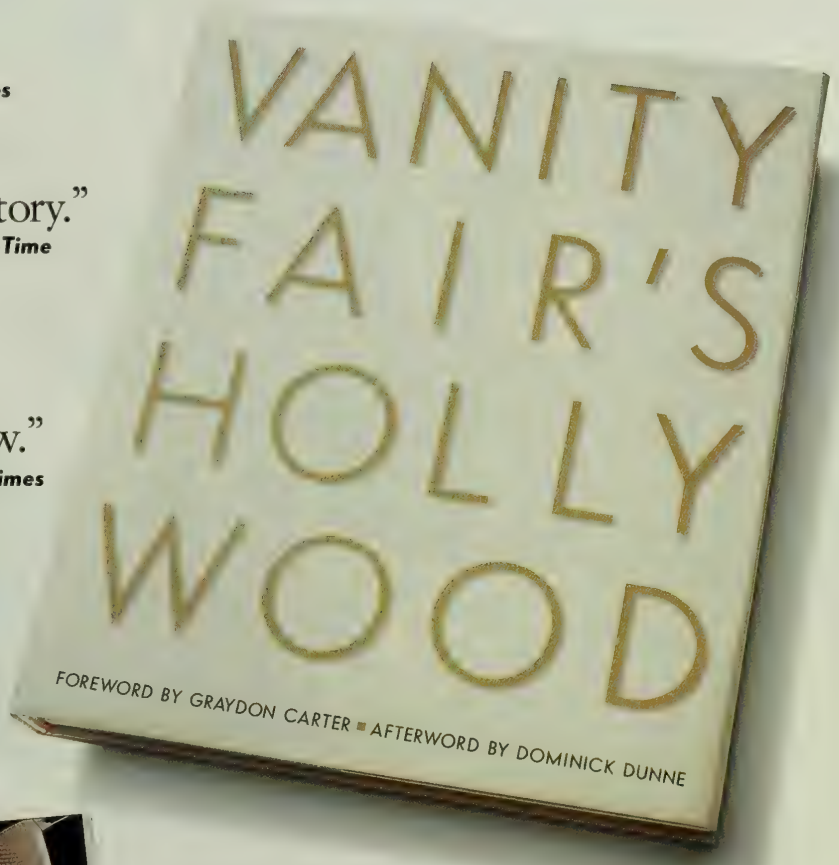
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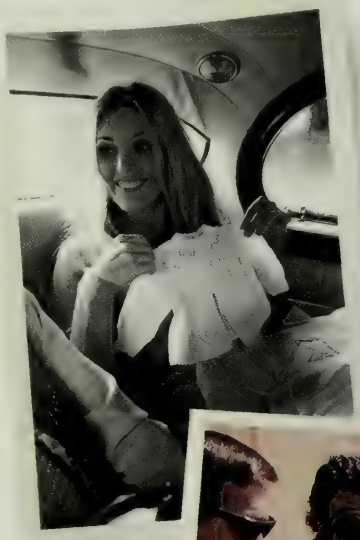
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[illegible] even she was with Jay. We talked about old times at the [illegible] and the marvelous turns her life had taken. I was drinking a joint and she took a few tokes. Everybody smoked pot back then. It was no big deal. She was joyous about having the baby, and she had never looked more beautiful. She spoke with great affection about Jay, and told me that he had become a family friend to her and Roman. There were rumors that all was not well in her marriage, but no such thing came up in our conversation. The baby seemed to be the solution to everything. I have always remembered that little interlude, because it was the last time I ever saw her. As always, she was dear, sweet, and utterly nice. After a while we went back in to the party.

William Tennant, who was Sharon's agent, had the horrible task of identifying the bodies. He was close to Roman and Sharon, and Jay cut his hair. He was playing tennis that Saturday morning when he heard about the murders. He got to Cielo Drive around noon, still wearing his tennis whites. After identifying Sharon, Jay, Abigail, and Voytek, he broke down and sobbed. Then he called Roman Polanski in London and broke the news to him. Bill was a handsome young guy who would later become an executive at Warner Bros. Popular about town, he was a regular at the Daisy. We had a mutual friend in a doomed Hollywood agent named Billy Belasco. Billy died in an automobile crash on Sunset Boulevard after he let the waiter he'd picked up at the Palm Restaurant drive his Jenson convertible 80 miles an hour when they were both allegedly on quaaludes. It happened the night before the memorial service Billy was going to host at his house in Bel Air for Sal Mineo, who had been stabbed to death in a garage. Billy was that kind of doomed.





TRAGIC PAIR A glowing Sharon Tate, *left*, shows off a gift for her expected child, 1969. *Below*, Roman Polanski and Tate's mother, Doris, at her funeral later that year.

In the years before Jay was killed, he had been training a you apprentice named Joe Torrenueva to style hair in the mann he had created, as well as to run his ever expanding business hair products for men. Joe was the first person I called after heard about Jay's death. I could hear the grief in his voice. J had always understood what a unique character Jay Sebring w with his own special place in the world of the famous. Today, J has a shop in Beverly Hills called Torrenueva, where he caters to lot of big names in the film and television world. Many of his c tomers, like me, used to be Jay's clients, so there's a long histo These days I live on the opposite coast, but every time I'm in L Angeles, I go and have a haircut with Joe, in his private room. H shows me pictures of his grandkids, and I tell him about m granddaughter, but we always end up talking about Jay. He wa part of our lives that we shared.

The fame Jay craved came to him by way of his dea not his life. He and Sharon were sitting on her bed talki when the killers burst into the room. Jay, lean and tri could have held his own in any fight, but knives and gu were something else. They got Jay first. Right up to t last moment of his life, his though were with Sharon. Dying, he cried o to the killers to spare her because s was pregnant. The killers didn't care

Sharon Tate has never faded from m thoughts, either. In 1982 my bea tiful actress daughter, Dominiqu was murdered. As a way of dealing w our grief, my former wife and I becam involved in support groups for paren of murdered children. Through one those groups we met Do Tate, Sharon's mother, who h become an advocate for t rights of victims of viole crimes. We found her inspi tional. She had turned her lo into an effort to help people g ing through what she had go through. Lenny and Doris g to know each other, and Do brought out a fighting spirit Lenny that I don't think Len knew she possessed. In tim

Dying, Jay Sebring cried out to the killers to spare Sharo

They say William Tennant was never the same after identifying the bodies. Jay had been stabbed and shot. Sharon had been stabbed 16 times, and her baby died in her womb. Whenever I saw him, I wanted to ask what it had been like, but Tennant never talked about it, and I never had the nerve to bring it up. Even 32 years later, he declined to appear on the E! channel film about Sharon Tate and her death.

I recently reread a newspaper account of that terrible event, as told by Susan Atkins, who killed Sharon:

"Sharon was the last to die," Susan said with a laugh as she described how Sharon was begging her, "Please don't kill me. Please don't kill me. I don't want to die. I want to live. I want to have my baby. I want to have my baby." Susan said she just looked Sharon straight in the eye and said, "'Look, bitch, I don't care about you. I don't care if you're going to have a baby. You had better be ready. You're going to die, and I don't feel anything about it.' In a few minutes I killed her and she was dead."

Lenny founded her own group, called Justice for Homicide Victim and the former President Bush presented her with a medal at t White House for her work. Doris is dead now, and so is Lenny.

Watching the E! channel documentary, I was particular struck by the footage of Doris Tate at the parole hearing for T Watkins, who, along with Susan Atkins, had killed Sharon a her unborn child. Doris was there to prevent Tex from ever b ing granted parole. Oh, boy, was she tough as she spoke direc to him: "What mercy, sir, did you show my daughter when s was begging for her life? Are those . . . victims . . . going to wa out of their graves when you get paroled? When will *I* come for parole? Can you tell me that?" On and on she went. No cr ing, no hysterics, just tough, straight talk, laced with contem You could see only a side angle of Tex Watkins's face, but I sa shame on it.

I had tears running down my cheeks. "Go, Doris, go!" I yell at the TV set. □

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THE MAN HOLLYWOOD TRUSTED

As longtime aide-de-camp to studio mogul Jack Warner, Richard Gully became the favored ally and companion of Golden Age Hollywood's elite. Before his death last fall, he broke decades of discreet silence about legends including Hepburn and Tracy, J.F.K., Bugsy Siegel, Aly Khan, and Cary Grant

BY AMY FINE COLLINS

On the misty California night of O tober 30, 2000, several dozen movie stars, rectors, producers, writers, and performers vestiges of the extinct Hollywood studio sy tem—converged on the Beverly Hilton ho for a memorial party in honor of their frie Richard Gully, a local legend who had di earlier in the month, at 93.

"Richard was the last personification Hollywood of the Golden Age," explai Stefanie Powers, who paid tribute alo with Esther Williams, Cyd Charisse, To Martin, Dominick Dunne, Merv Griffi Howard Keel, Robert Stack, Angie Dick son, and George Hamilton. Recalls Arle Dahl, "In a time of high glamour, han some leading men, and fabulous-looki women, Richard was the ringmaster. H was the catalyst, the ally, the confidan of stars, socialites, gangsters, heads studios, and heads of state." Actre Kathy Brown McGavin, also a dinn guest, remarks, "Because everyo trusted him, Richard knew everyon whole story." Says Robert Wagn who flew in with Jill St. John for t celebration, "In a town full of frau Richard was *it*—the real item."

Gully's Travels

As he was, in his own word "waiting until everyone w dead," Gully never realiz his ambition to publish a memo Instead, immediately following h birthday last June, he began to na rate his tale over a series of teas the Beverly Hills and Peni



WARNER CLIMATE Richard Gully and Vera Ellen at a Warner Bros. dinner party, circa 1950; *inset*, Gully's datebook for October 17, 1956.

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"Richard was the last personification of Hollywood of the Golden Age," says Stefanie Powers.



sula hotels, dinners at Le Dome, and telephone conversations between California and New York.

"The circumstances of my life have been extraordinary," he commenced. "Almost every day of my life has been colorful. I am by nature a diplomat, and I've always been at the right place, and known the right people, at the right time. I was born in 1907 in England at the height of the Empire. Then I was in Berlin before Hitler, and in Mexico City in the 40s, with the exiled aristocrats. I landed on Utah Beach on D-day. And I was in Hollywood during the Golden Age. I started out as a glamour boy and ended up a distinguished old man. After what I've seen and heard, nothing shocks me and nothing surprises me."



GLOBAL CITIZEN
From top: Gully and socialite Tomás Gurza in Mexico City, May 1942; Gully and Countess Dorothy di Frasso with Captain Hoffman of the *Metha Nelson*, on which they cruised with Bugsy Siegel in search of treasure, 1938; Gully's passport, which took him to America in 1936.

Lucky Bastard

Born "on the wrong side of the blanket," Gully was the first child of the second Viscount Selby and his paramour, Dorothy Grey. "The fact that I was a love child is a technicality," he insisted. "My parents married as soon as my father's divorce became final." His maternal aunt, Sybil Grey, was the mother of Anthony Eden, Gully's first cousin. His great-uncle, Earl Grey, was prime minister. "It is not by coincidence that I am drinking Earl Grey's tea," he said.

In 1923, when Gully was 16, his father died. "My mother informed me only then that my younger brother was going to be the third Viscount Selby. But she never told me why. It was a traumatic experience, but it's worked out for the best. My life has been a lot less boring than if I had been sitting in Parliament all these years."

To reduce her shame over her eldest son's revealed bastard status, his mother pulled him out of his boarding school, Repton, and shipped him off to his grandmother Lady Grey in Brighton. "She lived in a bigger, better house with more servants. So in a way, I came out of it better. I had made up my mind by then to lead an exciting life, surrounded by beautiful people." From Brighton he was transferred out of the country to Chillon College, in Switzerland.

"Because I was tall and athletic was left alone at school I had no h mosexual experiences," Gully explain His induction into carnal pleasure ca slightly later, and was a shade raci Back in London, around 1926, he w picked up by former Ziegfeld girl Peg Hopkins Joyce, the libidinous headlin generating adventuress who inspir Anita Loos's *Gentlemen Prefer Blond* "They holed up together for a few da in Park Lane in London in the We End," says Angela Barton, Gully's clo friend and neighbor.

Thus prepared for adulthoo Gully departed for Munich U versity. "Leaving England gave m an international flair," he said. " Munich, with one introduction got off to a flying start. I was a pl boy, very good-looking and fab lously successful with girls." H mistress for three years in Germa was the Countess von Finckenste whose "castle was used as a locati in Greta Garbo's *Conquest.*"

Hollywood

Having run swiftly through an heritance from his grandmoth "I was broke by 1936," Gul said. His cousin the seventh Earl Warwick (known as "Foulke") was "t best-looking man in England of h day. He was given a $750-a-week MG contract, and I asked, 'Can I tag along

"The first person my cousin Foulke troduced me to was Countess Dorothy Frasso. She appreciated my elegance, a she invited me to become her permane houseguest." A leather-goods heiress fro Watertown, New York, di Frasso was ma ried to a Roman nobleman who "stayed Italy," Gully said. Her husband befo Count Carlo di Frasso had been Clau Grahame-White, the British aviation pi neer, for whom she helped underwrite t first airfeld in England. During their gra tour in 1920, Mary Pickford and Doug Fairbanks "stayed with Dorothy at her fa ulous Villa Madama in Rome," later req sitioned by Mussolini. "When I arrived Hollywood, Dorothy had just finished h famous love affair with Gary Cooper. filled the void. I became her live-in esc to great parties. She was eccentric, col ful, ahead of her times. In the 30s, lo before anyone else had dreamed of such thing," she built a soybean-canning facto "with Benjamin Siegel as her partner."

Guys and Molls

Siegel and Dorothy had joined forc in this dubious venture because "they we having a big love affair," Gully sai "Ben—no one called him 'Bugsy'—was

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organizer, a brilliant busi-
Ben had magnetic charm,
blue eyes. Physically, he was
sible. Only, he had bad diction
spoke like a gangster.

"How long did Dorothy di Frasso's affair with Ben Siegel last? On Dorothy's side forever." As the countess receded from his life and the femme fatale moll Virginia Hill burst into the picture, "Dorothy and Esta, Ben's devoted wife, became friends," Gully said. "They shared the same objective—to keep Siegel alive.

"As the movie *Bugsy* showed," Gully said, Siegel went drastically over budget while building the quixotic Flamingo Hotel in Las Vegas, in 1945–46. "Lucky Luciano (who hated Siegel because he would not go into drugs trafficking) advised Meyer Lansky, 'He's got to be executed.' At first Lansky tried to protect him—they had grown up together on Manhattan's Lower East Side. Before he died, Siegel told Lansky, 'Never unload your shares in the Flamingo.'

"But there's an important part of the story that the movie left out," Gully continued. "Lansky and Luciano told Allen Smiley, Siegel's terribly good-looking, terribly devoted assistant, 'Siegel trusts you, so you have to set it up. If you don't, you'll be killed, too.' Smiley went along. Lansky sent Smiley to Beverly Hills for a meeting with Siegel at Virginia Hill's house on Linden Drive. It was a summer night, and Smiley was instructed to pull the curtains so the gunman could see in. Lansky had said, 'You've got to sit next to him on the sofa so he won't be suspicious.' And Smiley replied, 'I hope the gunman is a good shot.' It's a heartbreaking story. Smiley loved him, but he had to follow the rule of the underworld."

Gully played his small part, too, in the legend of the Flamingo Hotel. "Siegel hired Richard to round up stars for its opening," reports Gully's friend Texan oil heiress Francie Whittenburg. "Richard asked, 'But won't they be in danger?' And Bugsy promised, 'Of course not. We only kill each other.'"

It was not the first time Siegel had tossed work Gully's way. Around 1939, "Ben had decided he felt sorry for me," Gully said. "He asked, 'What are you doing? Do you want a job? I'll call Mark Hellinger at Warner Bros.'" Hellinger, a writer from New York who "specialized in gangster pictures, had me put on the payroll for one year. I had a nondescript job, just sort of wandered around." During lunch hour one day, Gully, a follower of the stars in every sense, stopped by the soundstage where Ida Lupino was making *They Drive by Night.* Lupino complained that "things were going badly. So I commiserated. 'You're an Aquarius,' I explained to her. 'Your aspects are bad now.' Right there she announced she was quitting the studio for the day, and her excu was 'Richard Gully told me to.' Ar that," Gully said, "is how Ida Lupino g me fired. I never spoke to her again."

Hearst Time

"A great problem in Hollywood of th 30s," Gully recalled, "was Mari Davies. Though she adored W liam Randolph Hearst, Marion bro all his rules. Sober or drunk, she was riot—so much fun. Hearst had a pe fect wife in Millicent, and a wonderf mistress in Marion.

"Hearst was th kind of man who didn't lik to go to parties, so he asked Harry Crock er," a columnist for the newspaper mag nate's *Los Angeles Examiner,* to esco Davies. "Hearst told Crocker to have Ma ion home by midnight. Crocker reminde Hearst that if it was a great party it wa hard to get Marion out. So Hearst gav Crocker a little vial containing knockou drops. Marion and Crocker attended dinner party that Dorothy di Frasso gav when the Duke and Duchess of Suther land were visiting. Because they led sep arate sex lives, the Duchess stayed a Dorothy's on North Bedford and the Duk stayed at Pickfair, the home of Mary Pick ford and Douglas Fairbanks. Dorothy seated Marion Davies next to Leslie How

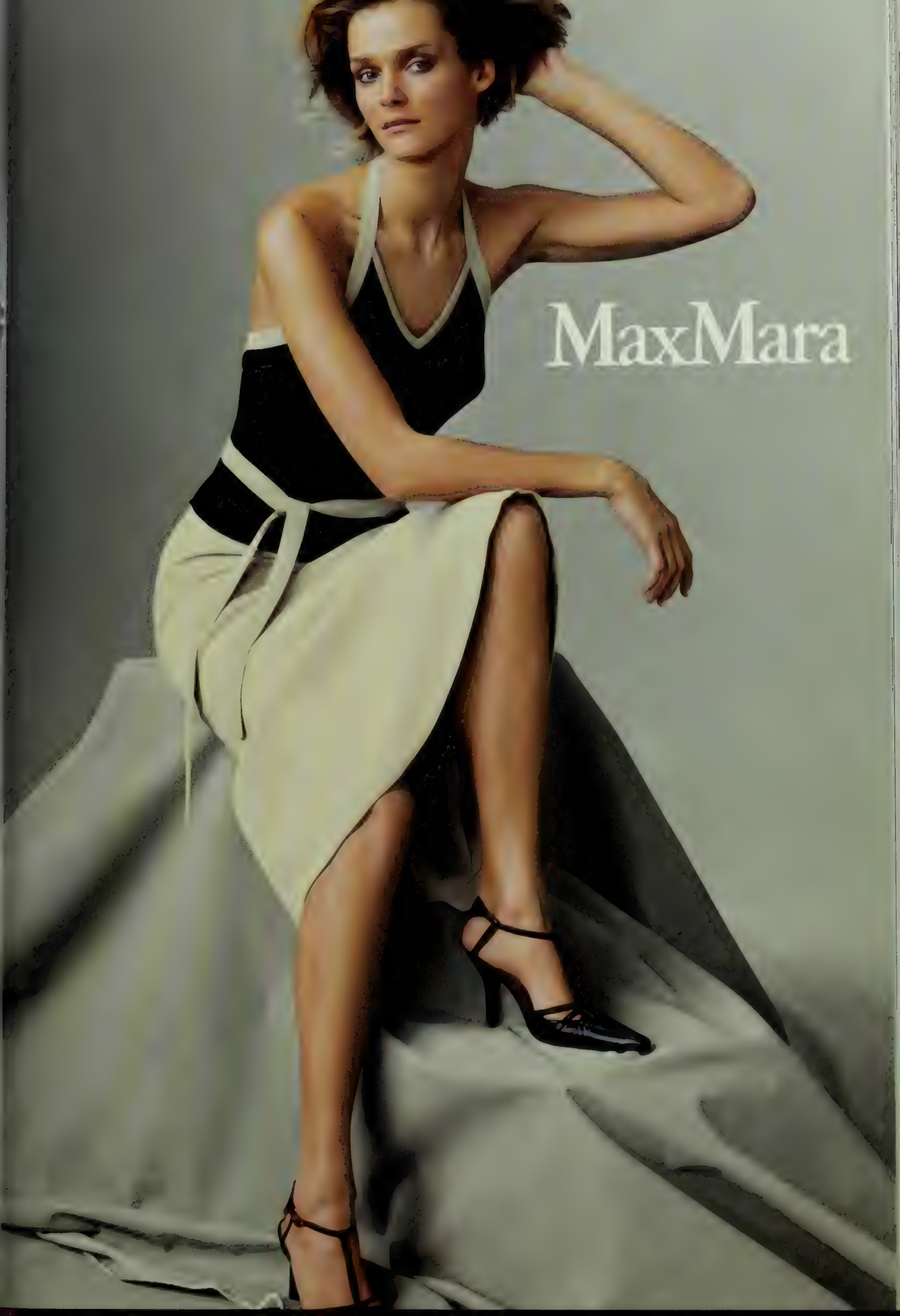
"I knew a lot of today's social pillars when they were tarts or gangsters' wives," said Gully.







LIFE OF THE PARTY
From top: Gully and Countess von Finckenstei winners of second prize at a Berlin costume ball 1931; Gully and Ginny Simms at a 1940s Hollywood function; Ruth Selwyn, Elena Gu Tomás Gurza, Princess Paulette Poniatowska, Gully dine at El Patio Mexico City, October 1942.


MaxMara


MaxMara




MaxMara

d. Now, Leslie Howard was not only in
d with more women than Clark Gable,
was a better lover, too.
"At midnight Crocker said, 'Marion,
s time to go now.' She complained,
ut Leslie Howard is here and I'm not
ady to leave.'" Unable to uproot her,
ocker doctored her drink. "Marion
as no fool," Gully continued. "She
itched glasses with Leslie Howard, and
ddenly he keeled over. A great com-
otion followed—everyone thought he'd
d a heart attack—and he was carried
t. Now, that is your Hollywood dinner
rty of the 30s."

Best Little Whorehouse

During this same visit, "the Duke
anted to get laid," Gully said. "He in-
ired where he should go, and he was
ld to see Madame Frances. Madame
ances ran a famous whorehouse at the
rder of Hollywood and Beverly Hills.
e was elegant, rich, and a great friend
Harry Cohn, with whom she gave joint
nner parties.
"Somehow the Duke of Sutherland mis-
ok 'Madame Frances' to mean *Kay*
rancis. The driver brought him to Kay's
use. Her butler answered the door and
nounced, 'The Duke of Sutherland is
lling on you.' Kay went down to the
awing room to greet him, and found the
uke in the nude, awaiting her! 'But I was
ld this was a whorehouse,' he protested."

Crime and Punishment

Until 1960, Gully said, Los Angeles was a sinkhole of corruption. "The chief of police back then was Clinton Anderson. I mentioned his name to our present chief of police, and he said, 'If we ran his town like Chief Anderson did, we'd all be in jail.' Burton Fitts, who was the D.A. during the same period, fixed everything. An example: in the early 30s, L. B. Mayer ran over a man and killed him." Mayer's talent agent and "glorified companion Frank Orsatti took the rap for L.B. They switched seats so it looked like it was Orsatti's fault." Orsatti, an ex-bootlegger, stayed in jail for a year."

"Precious, when you go back as far as I do, you make certain people uncomfortable," Gully said. "I knew a lot of today's social pillars when they were tarts or gangsters' wives."

Maxwell's House

"To finish up the 30s, I had no work after Ida Lupino had me fired from the job that Ben Siegel got for me, and Dorothy was out of town for a while. So Elsa Maxwell asked me to stay with her and Dickie Fellowes-Gordon at their house on Schuyler Road in Beverly Hills. Imagine, Dickie left the Duke of Alba for Elsa Maxwell! I spent three months living with these two women. They were weird. The language between them! I took them to parties every night because they needed an escort. One afternoon Cole Porter dropped by. He had just finished the score for *Panama Hattie,* which he wrote for Ethel Merman. He sat down and played 'Make It Another Old-Fashioned, Please' for us."

Three women financed Elsa: Jessie Donahue, the Woolworth heiress; Millicent Hearst; and Dolly O'Brien, the former wife of the Fleischman-yeast scion, who turned down Clark Gable's proposal of marriage.

Gay Deception

"There were a few others besides Elsa who were just out-and-out," Gully said. "And then there were some who were bisexual. Spencer Tracy was. Homosexuality for many stars was an opportunistic thing, a passing phase to get their careers off the launching pad. Errol Flynn, for example, wasn't homosexual. Mitch Leisen, an important director, was always 'adopting' young boys at the start of their careers. Marlene Dietrich was not much of a lesbian. She had a real passion for Jean Gabin. When Jean Howard didn't have Jock Whitney courting her, then she might have a woman. Glamorous women never could hold on to their men."

Gully regarded Jack Warner as "a playboy. He lived like royalty, and thought in terms of royalty."

Cary Grant had a fleeting "crush on me. Soon after my arrival, he and Randolph Scott invited me up to their beach house," Gully said. "When Cary realized I wasn't interested, he never made any moves, and he and Scott simply didn't invite me back. They took pains not to embarrass me. They were gentlemen.

"Cary was bisexual," he explained. "Dorothy di Frasso set up the match between Cary and Barbara Hutton. That one was doomed to fail. They were thrilled with each other at first because each saw in the other something that didn't exist. He thought she was a great society type, and she thought he was this fabulous, sophisticated dream—not a boy from the backstreets of Bristol.

"Spencer Tracy was never sober. I don't think he functioned as a man. He and Katharine Hepburn had chemistry only on-screen.

"Danny Kaye was mean, a horror. He mistreated his wife, Sylvia Fine, who wrote his material. His love affair with Olivier, the coldest man I ever met, was so tacky."

True Love

Though most celebrity matches were predicated on the flimsy foundations of "ambition and vanity," Gully said, "real love did exist—between Jean Harlow and Bill Powell, between Gable and Lombard. Like so many sexy women, Harlow ended up with the wrong man. Harlow never had the proper life, the dignity and prestige that Powell would have given her.

"Bogart and Lauren Bacall were ideal for each other. They were both horrors. Bogart was insecure, always trying to rock the boat. Bacall was disagreeable, charmless, aggressive. Yet Bogart is our biggest cult star, more than Gable. And *Casablanca* is now bigger than *Gone with the Wind.* The cult of Bogart will outlive the cult of Gable."

For Gully, the ultimate love affair in the annals of Hollywood was not "Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks—Hollywood's first aristocrats—nor Greta Garbo and John Gilbert. They didn't last. It was Billy Haines and Jimmie Shields." After Mayer fired Haines for homosexual misconduct, the erstwhile matinee idol reemerged as the most fashionable decorator in town. "Billy was older than Jimmie Shields [Haines's former stand-in]. As Billy grew feeble, they went out less and less. Everyone said, 'Jimmie Shields is going to whoop it up when Haines dies. He will inherit all the money.' Yet when Billy died, Jimmie stayed in their house and cried for months. And then he killed himself. They had been together 47 years."

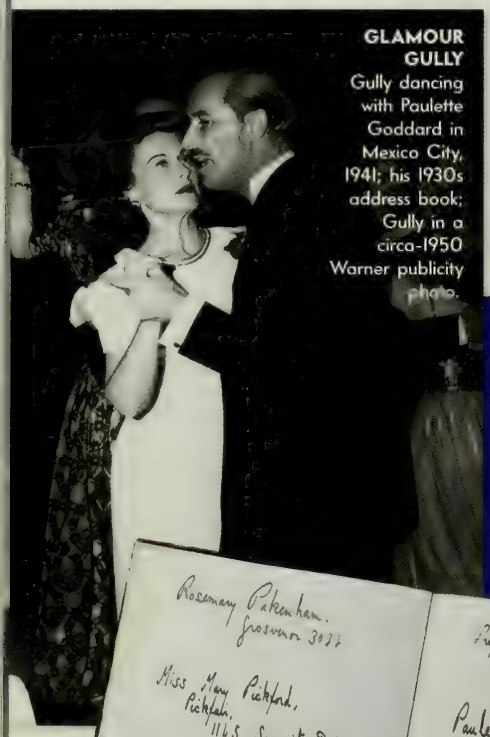
South of the Border

In the early 40s, Dorothy di Frasso and Gully migrated to Mexico City. The madcap countess's ignoble objective "was to sit out the war," Francie Whittenburg says. There, through Barbara Hutton, Gully met Magda Lupescu, in exile with her lover Carol II, King of Romania. In her scandalous position as the king's official mistress, Mme. Lupescu "had run Romania," Gully said. "She was his minister of war, his minister of finance. Mme. Lupescu was the most bril-

[illegible] I ever knew, the most fabu[illegible] I ever met, the most magnet[illegible] that ever lived. You looked at [illegible] and were mesmerized. She had ex[illegible]ordinary red hair, white skin, and green eyes."

In Mexico City he also encountered C. Z. Guest. "She was a wild, sexy kid," he said. "I have a copy of the original Diego Rivera nude painting of her that caused such a scandal and made Winston Guest so nervous. It hung in [expatriate financier] A. C. Blumenthal's restaurant in the Hotel Reforma in Mexico City."

Gully's idyll among the scoundrels and enchantresses of Mexico City was cut short by no less a personage than British foreign secretary Anthony Eden, his first cousin. Prompting this intervention, Francie Whittenburg says, was the suspicion that "Dorothy was spying for Hitler. She wasn't, but Eden put pressure on the U.S. to put pressure on Richard to leave Mexico—and Dorothy. Otherwise, his residency would be on the line. That would have been around 1943, 1944."



GLAMOUR GULLY Gully dancing with Paulette Goddard in Mexico City, 1941; his 1930s address book; Gully in a circa-1950 Warner publicity photo.

The War

Gully might have enlisted in the British army, but "I heard the food was better in the U.S. Army," he said. "I had powerful friends in Hollywood. Sol Rosenblatt was close to F.D.R., and was the attorney for Harry Cohn. When you have the right connections, it's amazing what you can do. Within 24 hours I was transferred directly into the army. I didn't have to go to boot camp. Instead I was stationed in Culver City, at Hal Roach's studios, in a motion-picture unit making training pictures for W.W. II, under General Arnold."

That sinecure was not fated to last. "One day an army inspector general came to me. I mentioned that I had motored all through Europe and spoke German and French. He said, 'You're being wasted here. You should be in a combat unit in Europe.'"

A technician in the 297th Battalion Engineer Combat, Gully landed in Normandy on D-day just short of his 37th birthday. Five months later he was fighting in the snowy forests of the Battle of the Bulge. During that "nightmare part of the war," Gully was sent out on detail to retrieve a carload of mines. At the checkpoint on the way back, he was accosted by a West Point man. "Because I spoke English with an accent he suspected me of being a German spy. He interrogated me. 'What is the capital of Florida?' he demanded. I replied, 'Palm Beach.' His next question was 'Who is L'il Abner's girlfriend?' I had no idea what he was talking about, so he declared, 'You are a spy and you're under arrest.' At that very moment along came another man, whom I reco[illegible]nized. It was director Josh Logan, a maj[illegible] in the U.S. Army! 'Major Logan,' I sai[illegible] 'I'm in trouble here. Do you remembe[illegible] you met me at a dinner at Jack Warner'[illegible] Greer Garson was there that night. We[illegible] both great friends of Mrs. Warner.' It w[illegible] a miracle. I was saved."

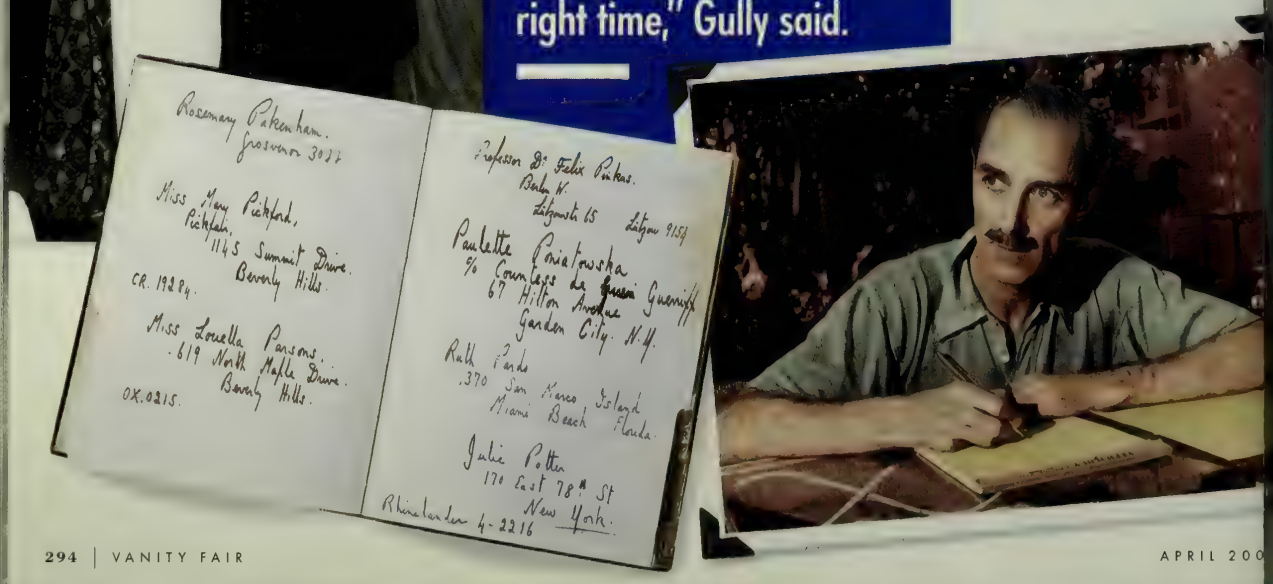
Sex and the Single Gully

"I was always fighting women off," Gul[illegible] confessed. "It got to be too much f[illegible] me. After a certain age, I became turne[illegible] off by sex." That still left plenty of tim[illegible] however, for him to "really get around[illegible]" Francie Whittenburg says. "He was pret[illegible] serious about Vera Ellen and Katherin[illegible] Grayson, and he was with Joanna Carsc[illegible] in Las Vegas on the night she met Johnny[illegible]

Says Kurt Niklas, the former maître [illegible] of Romanoff's and more recently the pr[illegible] prietor of the Bistro and the Bistro Ga[illegible]den, "Throughout the decades the questio[illegible] has come up over and over again. [illegible] Richard Gully gay? I have my reply. At R[illegible] manoff's, every day at lunchtime, emplo[illegible] ees had to move their cars. One afternoo[illegible] I walked by the corner, right next to th[illegible] restaurant, where Richard usually parke[illegible] He always left his car on the street, b[illegible] cause he wasn't about to pay for val[illegible] parking. And there he was inside his car[illegible] I'm pretty sure it was a Ford—humpin[illegible] Grace Kelly. A few minutes later the tw[illegible] of them came in for lunch."

Like many veterans, after the war Gu[illegible] ly felt the need for a wife. In 1947, h[illegible] found her in Dée Bredin, a sometim[illegible] *Vogue* contributor previously ma[illegible] ried to General Motors directo[illegible] C. S. Mott. The ceremony too[illegible] place at the house of Dorothy [illegible] Frasso's brother, New York Stoc[illegible] Exchange president Bertrand Taylo[illegible] in Hobe Sound. In Manhattan the

"I've always been at the right place, and known the right people, at the right time," Gully said.




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[illegible] Fifth Avenue, and in Palm [illegible] life "centered around the Ever[illegible] Club," Gully said. "The sex period [illegible] our marriage was fabulous. We never saw anyone but each other." But, Gully said, after that "it was ludicrous. We hated each other's friends."

As soon as their marriage ended (Louella Parsons ran an item about their breakup on January 8, 1948), Gully called on Ann Warner at her apartment in the Waldorf Towers. "From a distance I had studied Jack Warner, Harry Cohn, and Darryl Zanuck," Gully recounted. "I knew if I ever had to have a real job, I would go to Jack."

The Warners

Gully's initial task as Jack Warner's employee was to accompany Ann to France. "Jack pleaded with me, 'Stop my wife from spending all my money!' So we got to France, and the first thing she did was loan $10,000 to Pierre Balmain to help him start his fashion house."

The Warners' daughter, Barbara Howard, explains, "My mother was a great student of everything beautiful—clothes, art, food, decorating, gardening—and she had a great sense of style. She really trusted Richard's opinions on travel, people, and parties. My father was a different story. My mother said to me, 'Before your father knew me he used to wear both a belt and suspenders.'

"He liked having Richard around because he was so perfectly proper and correct—everything my father wasn't. He loved playing off Richard. Together they were like a vaudeville team—the straight man and the comedian." (Billy Wilder once said that "Jack Warner would rather tell a bad joke than make a good picture.")

If some film-colony denizens considered Warner a crude, despotic buffoon, Gully regarded him as "a playboy, a glamour boy. He lived like royalty, and thought in terms of royalty." And though as Warner's aide-de-camp Gully was paid a pittance, he lived like a prince. "I never got a raise in 10 years," Gully said. "But Jack gave me an executive rating and every perk. If he took the sleeper, so did I. Warner Bros. had a deal with Ford. In exchange for using their cars in its pictures, the studio got 50 Fords a year. Jack always gave me one. I didn't have to pay for gas either; I used the studio's pump." Jack's brother Harry was not amused. "Harry Warner was a businessman," Gully said. "He hated my job."

Though Warner was fond of repeating that he had found his upper-class alter ego "in a tree on the Riviera," he was in awe of Gully's impeccable social and sartorial polish. "Richard took my father shopping in London, to Lobb, Anderson & Sheppard, Turnbull & Asser, then on to the gambling clubs," Barbara Howard says. "My father was a man's man. I never thought of Richard particularly as working for my parents. He was like Zelig—just always there."

Not long after he squired Ann to Paris, Gully "went with Jack to Cannes for gambling," he reminisced. "Jack took rooms at the Carlton. I told him he was far too important to be in a hotel, that he must have a villa." In 1949, back at the studio, where Gully had been named head of the foreign-press office, Jack Warner charged him with an assignment that enraptured the Englishman. "Jack sent me to Europe again, to look for a villa, and right away I found the fabulous Villa Aujourd'hui in Cap d'Antibes, next to the Eden Roc hotel." The acquisition of this sybaritic Mediterranean property "strengthened my position with Jack. My job was to help him become one of the key people in the international set. And Jack became a global figure. He was so spectacular, people just came to him. Gully assumed the title of special assistant to Jack Warner.

> "Jack Warner was a king on a throne, and Richard was his prime minister, the anointed," says Arlene Dahl.

Gully's Gallantry

Exactly what Gully was "assisting" Warner with was a matter of some speculation. No one doubted that he helped smooth out problems on certain sensitive movie locations—*Giant*'s, for example, near Houston, where he struggled valiantly to curb Rock Hudson's randy adventures with the neighborhood cowboys. But many Hollywood insiders were also convinced that Gully's main function at the studio "was to be Jack Warner's pimp," says Leonora Hornblow, widow of producer Arthur Hornblow Jr. "Believe me, Jack Warner didn't *need* a pimp." Angie Dickinson concurs: "Richard was never a procurer for anyone. But he certainly was cupid."

Perhaps the seamy gossip arose from a misinterpretation of Gully's habit of taking fledgling Warner starlets under his wing; he would nimbly guide them through the studio labyrinth, inevitably nudging them into or out of romance along the way. Joanna Barnes, who joined Warner Bros. in 1957, when she was 22, explains: "Richard would say, 'This director has a tendency to have a whipping boy. Just make sure it's not you.' Or 'Jack Warner hates polka dots. Don't ever wear them.' And I'd vet my invitations with Richard. I was asked one time to Conrad Hilton's, and he said, 'Oh, precious, that's a party for Serge Semenenko [the shady financier who took control of the studio in the late 50s]. He probably has his eye on you.' I was worried about Richard, though, so I asked him point-blank, 'Richard, people call you a pimp. Is it true?' He explained that 75 to 80 percent of what gets done in this town happens through social occasions, and that it was to my advantage to meet A-list people. What anyone did after Richard got them together was, he felt, entirely their business."

Arlene Dahl, who also became Gully's protégé, remembers, "On my very first day at Warner's—I had signed in 1947 for a screen test—Gary Cooper invited me to lunch at the executive dining room. Before we had finished, I had met Joan Crawford, Ronald Reagan, Errol Flynn, and Richard Gully. Richard fell

Code words such as "nice," "charming" and "she has exquisite table manners" are continually used in Society and are a test of your sophistication. To describe a person as "nice" means he or she is deathly dull; to classify someone as "charming" means he or she will always say the right thing but without any flair. [illegible] "exquisite table

PURPLE PROSE
Gully's late-life musings for a potential memoir covering Hollywood society, World War II, and the international set.

JILSANDER

7317



"In a town full of frauds, Richard Gully was *it*—the real item," says Robert Wagner.







JACK AND SHILL
From top: Richard Gully at a Hollywood premiere with Arlene Dahl, circa 1950s; with Natalie Wood at a mid-1950s luncheon; sunning with Jack Warner in Cap d'Antibes.

...ponsible for me. ... taught me how to handle Louella Parsons and Hedda Hopper. 'If they call you at the same time,' he advised, 'take Louella. She has more papers. You talk to her, and I'll fix Hedda so nobody loses out.'"

In 1948, while Dahl "was dating John Kennedy," Gully who engineered the mogul's guest lists—"included us for an evening at the Warners'," Dahl says. "Rita Hayworth and Aly Khan came, Clark Gable attended with Lady Ashley, and Grace Kelly arrived with Oleg Cassini. The Shah of Iran was there, on his own. After dinner, but before the screening, I sat in a corner with the Shah and Jack, who were meeting for the first time. The Shah was discussing with him how they could work together if Jack ever became president. I couldn't imagine him president because he was never without pain in his back. He'd take too many pills and get drowsy."

Gully had included the Shah at the Warners' dinner party on that night because the Iranian had requested an introduction to Dahl. When the Shah proposed that she come away with him to Sun Valley on a ski holiday, Dahl consulted Gully. "Richard knew I was still a virgin, and he said, 'Listen, dear, it's a valuable thing in this day and age.'

"Because he never abused his power, I don't think people realize how important Richard was," Dahl concludes. "As a head of studio, Jack Warner was a king on a throne, and Richard was his prime minister, the anointed."

Mrs. Warner

I adored Ann Warner," Gully said. "Jack had fallen for her because of her glamour. When you're glamorous, it doesn't matter where you come from.

"In my estimation Paulette Goddard was one of the most fascinating women in the world—brilliant, clever, and fun. But she had a murky past—she was really a glorified hooker. Paulette was one of the three female stars of the golden era who had a genius for finance. The other two were Mary Pickford and Merle Oberon. Grace Kelly looked well at a dinner; she was soft as silk, and for an Irish bricklayer's daughter, she became an enormous social star. But in terms of excitement, Grace couldn't hold a candle to Paulette.

"Chicness, as opposed to glamour, is not a quality associated with Hollywood," Gully postulated. "I can think of three who had it: Audrey Hepburn, Gertrude Lawrence, and Irene Dunne. To be chic you've got to be a lady. The only one who was chic without being a lady was Merle Oberon—she was really Queenie Thompson from Bombay. Merle was terrified of having a baby, because she feared it would be black. But none of this mattered. In Hollywood, if people liked you, they covered for you." One beloved all-American comic "was out with a hooker every night, but people covered for him because he did a lot of good."

"Back to Ann—yes, there was a physical thing between us. But when it came down to having an affair, we were old-fashioned. Both times that we got into bed we asked each other, 'Why do we have to go through with it? It's not the right thing to do to Jack.'"

The Player

Warner was not burdened by such scruples. In Hollywood, his preferred cruising spot was the house of Warner Bros. producer Brian Foy. "Foy's was the scene of all the action in Hollywood," Gully said. "Brian was a total showman and he had developed a wonderful routine. He loved to make women's-prison pictures because he could give out jobs to at least 50 girls—he'd cast his movies by throwing big dinner parties. He was a rogue, but he always brought his pictures in on time and under budget."

Hopeful female extras, however, did not rank as Warner's most consuming passion. His "gambling was spectacular," Gully said. "Jack was one of the great high-stakes show-offs of the South of France. He never got ruffled. He'd lose $100,000 without batting an eyelash."

One evening in Cannes at the casino,


Diet
Coke

[illegible] informed Gully, "You see that [illegible] over there? I'm going to keep [illegible] the bets until I bankrupt him." Gully protested, "Jack, you can't do that!" Warner replied, "Watch me!" Gully hastened over to the portly stranger, "and who do you think it was? King Farouk of Egypt!"

Farouk and Warner became "very fond of each other," Gully continued. "He and Jack would play baccarat all night, then breakfast together at five A.M. One time when the king decided he really wanted to impress Jack, he sent his car down to the front of Villa Aujourd'hui. His driver came out carrying a huge case—of Coca-Cola, 'compliments of the king.' Farouk knew that Jack couldn't get Coca-Cola, and he had the bottling concession in Egypt. These gestures of affection happened all the time in the 40s and 50s. The tycoons today don't enjoy what they're doing."

Sun and Lovers

Among the vivid luminaries in Warner and Gully's inner circle in the South of France, none was more resplendent than Aly Khan. "Aly was the most irresistible man I have ever seen," Gully said, "with the exception of Gary Cooper. I never saw a woman say no to either of them. But neither Aly nor Cooper ever went after women who were happily married or not particularly sensual. Both were enchanting loverboys—likable, and great hosts too. They idolized women, treated them with great respect. A playboy like Porfirio Rubirosa did not. He was an adventurer, serving his own interests, a terrible character. He treated Barbara Hutton like a housemaid. Howard Hughes was fun when he was a young man, but he became such a bore. No one liked him. Women despised him.

"Rubirosa, of course, was famous for the scale of his anatomy," Gully said. "Though the word out of the Lakeside Country Club locker room in L.A. was that Forrest Tucker was a close contender. For that matter so was Lee Marvin."

But the male organ which most concerned Gully was the heart. "I was a big help during Cooper's affair with Patricia Neal," he said. "I was the beard. Patricia was under contract with Warner Bros., and they fell in love during the filming of *The Fountainhead.* I had once dated Patricia, so we were a natural threesome. For two years the press didn't know, and it lasted five. I did a good job! I saw their affair through from beginning to end. After they broke up I was in Rome with Jack, and Patricia Neal called. 'It's bothered me,' she said. 'You were with Cooper and me all that time, you know what it was. When he left, he didn't say good-bye.' She never recovered from it. In the end, the Catholic Church got to Cooper. Of the Hollywood crowd, he was the man I most admired."

Aly Khan might have fared better if he had shown some of Cooper's restraint. "Aly's stepmother, the Begum Aga Khan, was the last of the Aga's four wives," Gully said. "She had a blonde, six-foot-tall girlfriend who ran a hotel boutique. Jack Warner fell madly in love with this shopgirl. Not knowing the boutique was a front, Jack would buy six handbags from her at one go—I gave one to my girlfriend of the time, Vera Ellen. Only by accident did I find out that the beautiful girl in the shop was the Begum Aga Khan's woman.

"Aly loathed his stepmother, attacked her, then went into a state of shock when he was disinherited," Gully said. "His one, absurd mistake is that he went around saying, 'My father married a goddamn lesbian.'" As a result, Gully felt, the Begum Aga Khan persuaded her husband to pass on his title to his grandson Karim, instead of to his eldest son and immediate heir.

> "After what I've seen and heard, nothing shocks me and nothing surprises me," said Gully.

End of Reel

Gully's Warner period "peaked" in 1956, the year of Grace Kelly's wedding—a union which the Englishman had facilitated in his capacity as the star's confidant. "Grace's wedding was the one occasion on which I wore all my medals—the Bronze Star, my campaign medals, and the Légion d'Honneur," Gully recalled. "Jack and I both were awarded the Legion of Honor. How did we get them? Jack's attorney was Suzanne Blum, who was very close to Prime Minister Léon Blum. She was also the lawyer of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor. Anything is possible with the right contacts. Jack had performed services vital to the French government by making propaganda pictures during the war. I simply rode in on Jack Warner's coattails. I was made a chevalier, which is the lowest rank."

The Warners terminated their arrangement with Gully in 1958. "He was called by the comptroller of the studio and told he was through," Hedda Hopper reported disapprovingly on May 7, adding loyally, "He knows everybody everywhere and I don't know a more popular man."

Gully said, "Ann fired me, out of aggravation. She was sick of Jack having a m[illegible] tress, and the three of us having more fi[illegible] than she. She couldn't fire her husband, she fired me." Unknowingly, Gully had s[illegible] the stage for his own expulsion by intr[illegible] ducing Warner to "the mistress of Ja[illegible] Hilton, a famous bandleader in Englan[illegible] who became a theater impresario. Ja[illegible] Hilton unloaded the girl onto Jack Warn[illegible] who smuggled her into Hollywood. I h[illegible] to cover up for him. He kept her in a ho[illegible] on Beverly Drive and Crescent. Before, wi[illegible] Jack, they came and went. This English g[illegible] was a real mistress." When Warner learn[illegible] that his wife, in a calculated maneuv[illegible] had abruptly returned from a New Yo[illegible] clothes-buying trip, the studio tycoon has[illegible] ly entrusted Gully with several thousan[illegible] dollars as a payoff to the girl, whom his a[illegible] sistant sent packing to England.

Gully bore no grudge against Ar[illegible] Warner. "I owe my whole life to Ann. S[illegible] was more important to me th[illegible] a mother, a sister, or a frien[illegible] Without her, I probably wou[illegible] have starved to death." Ann, [illegible] turn, forgave Gully. During h[illegible] long tenure as a recluse, she st[illegible] spoke to him regularly—a ritu[illegible] she had already instituted b[illegible] 1957, when she stopped hoste[illegible] ing the dinner parties in h[illegible] own majestic house. "After [illegible] the guests had left," Barba[illegible] Howard says, "Richard or[illegible] would go upstairs to report to her on t[illegible] evening." And when Ann Warner die[illegible] obscure and obese, in 1990 (the *Los Ang[illegible] les Times* illustrated her obituary with a[illegible] other woman's photograph), "she left n[illegible] money in her will"—a sum of $10,000. Gu[illegible] ly also stayed friendly with Jack Warne[illegible] who became a deposed king, without cou[illegible] try or courtiers, following his ill-advised sa[illegible] of the studio.

"In all those years, Richard never su[illegible] ceeded in civilizing Jack Warner," pub[illegible] cist Warren Cowan reflects. Merv Griff[illegible] proposes that *My Fair Lady,* one of Jac[illegible] Warner's last films, was in some way "th[illegible] story of his life. He's Eliza Doolittle [illegible] Richard's Professor Higgins."

A seductive theory—which Barba[illegible] Howard rejects on the grounds that "m[illegible] father was dying to play the part of Eliz[illegible] Doolittle's *dad.* That is exactly how h[illegible] saw himself. Fortunately, Cukor talke[illegible] him out of it."

Bringing Up Baby

Adrift and bewildered, Gully "neve[illegible] quite got over losing his job," says a[illegible] tress Monique van Vooren (who[illegible] Gully discovered in Brussels in 1944). Y[illegible] he did manage a lively—and fast—rebound[illegible] "If you were a Hollywood-come-lately,

explains, "Richard became the one on to call to make all the introductions organize the dinners." In this quasi-assadorial guise, the Englishman met ıcisco "Baby" Pignatari, the gregarious ıot-four Brazilian mining-and-metals mil-ıire. "Richard became Baby's social sec-y," says Princess Ira von Furstenburg, hird of the Latin American's four wives. rough Richard he met all the ladies."

ully said, "I worked for Baby from to 1960. Baby and I were a hell of a ıbo. We spent two years traveling the d. Baby was not a playboy by vocation; vorked. He was a playboy by instinct. night we walked into a big party, and rad Hilton said to him, 'Mr. Pignatari, are so tall, rich, and good-looking. y do you need to employ Richard Gul-And he answered, 'I don't want to have ush across the room explaining who I and how much money I have. I em-Richard to set it all up in advance.'"

During a visit to Paris (where it was not sual for the profligate Brazilian to burn ugh $10,000 for a night on the town), ıatari "and some model got roaring nk," Francie Whittenburg says. "He got an altercation with two cops, and all of them got beaten up." The police-ı wound up in the hospital, and Baby the model landed in prison. At three in the morning, Pignatari awakened Gully at the George V Hotel with a frantic call. "You've got to get me out of jail," he pleaded. "I'll lose my diplomatic passport!" Having once entertained the Paris chief of police at Warner Bros., Gully had astutely saved the prefect's card in his wallet. Gully implored the French official to help him rescue Pignatari from his predicament. "Impossible," the chief told Richard. "Both of these policemen are national heroes. They were members of the Resistance." Gully inquired, "Is there anyone at all who can help?" The chief told him yes, there was one man who could, the head of the Paris Mafia. "And Richard consulted him next," Whittenburg continues. "The Mafia head informed Richard that in order to get Baby and the girl released, he needed to establish a huge fund for the wives of policemen killed in action. Baby provided the money, Richard set it all up, and Baby and the model were freed."

Among the "hundreds of girls" that Baby bedded, he "rated Linda Christian as the best lay of all time," Gully said. "I introduced them." When Pignatari had sated himself with the Mexican bombshell, a simple farewell would not do. Instead, he hired a brass band and demonstrators who clustered under the starlet's Rio hotel window, where they chanted, "Linda, go home!"

Jill St. John says, "Baby was a bit too much. Richard set me up with him while I was doing a movie at MGM, *Honeymoon Hotel.* Baby took me to the Escoffier Room for dinner. To impress me, he raised a champagne glass, placed it under his teeth, and chewed it. Then he took a chip out of his mouth and carved my initials on his skin. I said, 'Don't I see some other woman's initials there, too?'"

Private and Public Relations

After Baby Pignatari passed out of his life, Gully took up public relations, representing some of the town's best restaurants—Romanoff's, the Bistro, the Bistro Garden—and its most established personalities: Henry Fonda, Arlene Dahl, Burt Bacharach. "I've really covered the waterfront," Gully said. Also among his clients were Jill St. John and Angie Dickinson, whose potent appeal to eminent members of the opposite sex kept the two sirens in the columns, with or without Gully's help.

"Jill St. John has an indescribable effect on men," Gully said. "She is clever, affectionate, exciting. Everyone fell for her—Kissinger, Sinatra, Stanley Korshak. And she'd end up friends with their wives. Angie Dickinson fascinates men, too," Gully said. "Angie is the embodiment of what I think a woman should be. Glamorous, lovable—

Very funny business, indeed!

Edited by Robert Mankoff, cartoon editor of *The New Yorker*

With an introductory essay by David Remnick, editor of *The New Yorker*



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[illegible] great problem in this town is [illegible] seldom see kindness in women. It's [illegible] by success, money, and power.

Angie's list is remarkable: John Kenneth Galbraith, Art Buchwald, the brilliant writer and director Richard Brook, Burt Bacharach. And, of course, J.F.K. Kennedy was at his best with Angie Dickinson. her love affair with him was serious," Gully said. "But she will never talk about it."

"Who Shot J.F.K.?"

"It was Johnny Roselli, for God's sake," Gully said. "He was the head of the Hollywood underworld, Sam Giancana's man. Roselli was hiding in the grassy knoll. Giancana was angry at J.F.K. because he failed to supply enough air cover for the Bay of Pigs—that was a failed attempt to recapture Cuba for the Mob. When Castro kicked out the underworld, they lost millions. Meyer Lansky owned the biggest hotel in Cuba. Batista had been in their pocket. Kennedy's death was all a matter of money. I knew Roselli. He was well-known in Hollywood. Damned good-looking man."

Roselli's "fatal mistake," Gully said, was not that he testified in Washington about the Mob's botched attempts on Castro's life. Rather, his error was to boast—"though only to another member of the underworld—'I was the guy who shot Kennedy.' Roselli didn't deserve to be bumped off. His body showed up, dismembered, in Florida.

"But what matters more than who killed Kennedy is who could have *prevented* it. Hoover knew. Hoover loathed Kennedy. And one Texas oilman was tipped off. The Texan had complained about J.F.K., and he was told, 'Just wait 24 hours.'

"And that's the true story. The Warren Commission was the most ludicrous thing in history."

Richard's Almanac

Ever since his decade at Warner Bros., Richard had been living in the Montecito Hotel, on Franklin and Vine. It had been convenient to the studio, but by the 70s the neighborhood had become seedy. One day Gully was mugged near his apartment and "beaten up fairly badly" when he refused to surrender his wallet, Angie Dickinson recalls. Gully moved west to a one-bedroom rental in the Plaza Towers on Doheny Drive. He never received visitors at either address.

"My husband, Prentice, and I were worried about Richard," San Francisco philanthropist Denise Hale says. "I told him that we would like to take care of him, help him financially. He got very annoyed. 'I don't need anything,' he said. 'I have everything I want.'"

Stefanie Powers observes, "Richard always adapted, but always stayed the same. I think of him at an avant-garde party Jane Fonda gave at the beach in the 70s—completely out of context in his immaculate Savile Row suit, but still perfectly at ease."

He "was invited to every house," Jill St. John adds, "because he always brought something to the table." Angie Dickinson points out, "There was just no one else like Richard. Tall, lean, smooth, so sophisticated, with that lickety-split way of talking. And he was quite a dancer."

Since he was out nightly anyway, collecting fresh stories and airing out the old ones, in 1987 publisher Seth Baker proposed that Gully, aged 80, contribute a weekly gossip column to his magazine, *Beverly Hills 213*. "Richard jumped at the chance," Baker says. In tangy, crisp prose he covered the topics that most preoccupied him—his far-flung friends, the movie business, and the British upper crust, of which he still felt himself very much a part.

"Richard was never a procurer for anyone," says Angie Dickinson. "But he certainly was a cupid."



ON THE TOWN
Richard Gully attends a 1976 gala with Angie Dickinson—a client who was one of his favorite women in Hollywood.

Title Search

For years, his friend Angela Barton say[illegible] Gully had been inconspicuously petitio[illegible] ing Parliament to grant him the title [illegible] the third Viscount Selby, which he b[illegible] lieved was his birthright. That effort prove[illegible] futile, but more recently Gully inspired [illegible] devoted band of American and Britis[illegible] friends—including Kirk Douglas, directo[illegible] George Sidney, Sir Gordon Reece, Britis[illegible] Home Secretary Michael Howard, an[illegible] the Duke of Buccleugh—to propose hi[illegible] for an Order of the British Empire. St[illegible] fanie Powers, who also pursued the po[illegible] sibility of knighthood for Gully, conje[illegible] tures, "unfortunately, the time when h[illegible] would have been most eligible had passed[illegible] Says Benjamin Siegel's daughter, "I thin[illegible] Richard would have traded the whole li[illegible] he had led in a minute, if it meant h[illegible] could have that title."

That's All, Folks!

Not long after the 93rd-birthda[illegible] dinner that Francie Whitten[illegible] burg hosted at Le Dome, Gu[illegible] ly, weakened by a fall and anemi[illegible] entered Cedars-Sinai Medical Cen[illegible] ter. As his condition deteriorated[illegible] Seth Baker tried to comfort hi[illegible] with hopeful blandishments. "N[illegible] Seth," he resisted, "let me go. I'[illegible] looking forward to seeing Ann Wa[illegible] ner again."

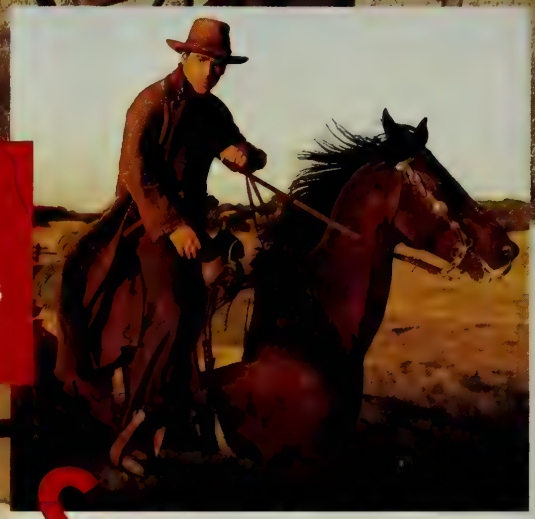
"Hollywood of the golden era," Gu[illegible] ly recalled in his final interview, "wa[illegible] a world of its own—a proper earthl[illegible] paradise with a beautiful climate, an[illegible] beautiful people doing exactly as the[illegible] liked. I wouldn't choose to be youn[illegible] now if it meant missing that moment i[illegible] history. You don't know how it cam[illegible] about, and you don't know how it disap[illegible] peared. But it is more than gone with th[illegible] wind. It has vanished and left no trace."

How much did Richard Gully know[illegible] And how much did he tell? Denise Hal[illegible] is certain that "Richard took most of hi[illegible] secrets to his grave." Francie Whittenburg[illegible] the executor of his estate, has in her po[illegible] session cartons overflowing with the ephem[illegible] era that Gully left behind. Among the vin[illegible] tage 8-by-10 glossies of him with movi[illegible] stars; billets-doux from girlfriends in Brazi[illegible] Finland, France, and Palm Beach; corre[illegible] spondence from the Duke of Buccleugh[illegible] Princess Grace, Aly Khan, the Warners[illegible] and his clerk at Lobb, the custom boot[illegible] maker; family documents; address books[illegible] Warner guest lists; appointment diaries[illegible] newspaper clippings; scribblings on lega[illegible] paper for the never-to-be autobiography[illegible] and tasteful erotica, was a little sheet o[illegible] which he had scrawled a motto: "A diplo[illegible] mat is a man who thinks twice before h[illegible] says nothing." □


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GOT SARSAPARILLA? Clockwise from top left, Gabriel Macht, Scott Caan, Colin Farrell, Will McCormack, and Gregory Smith. *Below*, Farrell, as Jesse James. *Bottom*, Caan, as Cole Younger, and Farrell. Photographed on location in Austin, Texas, October 2, 2000.





TOP GUNS

Jesse James rides again, played by Irish up-and-comer Colin Farrell, in this month's *American Outlaws*



Since the dawn of Hollywood time, there have been a least three dozen movies made about Jesse James. That doesn't quite take us to Tarzan level (closer t seven dozen), but it's not shabby. James, who stuck up hoit banks and railroads but never punched a horse or harmed single hair on a poor widow's head—at least as legend woul have it—has been essayed over the years by talents as va ied as Rob Lowe, James Keach, Robert Duvall, Roy Roger and Tyrone Power. The very first movie Jesse, and surely th one having the most "issues" with the role, was none othe than Jesse James Jr., who played Dad in two 1921 feature The next Jesse will be Colin Farrell, the swaggering Irish ac tor who made a huge impression on the numerous journalist and six paying customers who saw last year's estimable Vietnam-era movie, *Tigerland*. The new James film, *America Outlaws*, appears to be taking an Abercrombie & Fitch–is approach to the subject. Out this month, it also stars Sco Caan, previously seen stealing cars in *Gone in 60 Seconds* and Gabriel Macht, who played William Holden opposit Jennifer Love Hewitt on TV in *The Audrey Hepburn Story*—an wasn't then struck down by lightning. —BRUCE HAND

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HURRICANE CHARLIE

Rapacious, combustible, and passionate, Charlie Bluh routinely made the impossib happen as he built his Gulf & Western empire. Taking Paramount in 1966, he hired (and battled) executi from Robert Evans to Barry Diller, turning the last-place studio into the unmatched hit factor of *Love Story*, *Chinatow* and *The Godfather*

BY ROBERT SAM ANSON

On February 20, 1983, an otherwise uneventful day in Hollywood, a small wire-service story appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* announcing the death, at age 56, of the founder and chief executive officer of the Gulf & Western Corporation. According to the report, which was tucked away near the bottom of page 19 of the sports section, cause of death was a heart attack, suffered aboard a corporate jet as it approached New York on a flight from the Dominican Republic, a country renowned for sugar and major-league ballplayers. The account noted that the deceased was an Austrian wartime immigrant who'd done well since the purchase in a small automobile-parts manufacturer in the mid-50s. No mention was made of a local Gulf & Western holding, an entity on Melrose Avenue called Paramount Pictures.

So, in four column inches, seemed to pass the life of Charles George Bluhdorn. But with the man *Life* magazine dubbed "The Mad Austrian," things were never so simple, and stories started to circulate.

One had it that cancer, not heart

THE DEAL-MAKER Charles Bluhdorn at his Gulf & Western office in New York City, 1967. He liked to yell and scream and acquire companies by phone.



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[illegible] had killed Charlie. Another, that he [illegible] not aboard his Gulfstream II [illegible] in the plush confines of his Dominican estate, then been loaded aboard his private jet as if alive, in the manner of El Cid. No, said still another, Charlie had died on the plane, and of a heart attack—experienced while communing intimately with a comely business reporter. There was even a report, which *Variety* checked out, that Charlie had been murdered the means poison, the poisoner acting on instructions of the Mafia. Hadn't *The Godfather,* after all, been a Paramount release?

Anything appeared possible with Charlie Bluhdorn, who collected 150-odd companies during his brief, combustible life, making everything from bumpers to sugar to mattresses to paper bags to cigars to wristwatches to cement to stockings to books to consumer loans to caskets. Not to mention motion pictures. Movies like *Chinatown, Love Story, Raiders of the Lost Ark, Reds,* and *Star Trek: The Motion Picture; Serpico, Grease, Nashville, Flashdance, Airplane!,* and *King Kong.* Screaming, hugging, pinching, kissing, cursing—sometimes literally foaming at the mouth—Charlie manufactured them all, plus *Ordinary People, Terms of Endearment,* and *Saturday Night Fever; 48 Hours, Rosemary's Baby, Paper Moon,* and *Goodbye, Columbus; The Conversation, The Longest Yard,* and *True Grit*—on and on, a celluloid string matched by no studio since.

Along the way, he made runs at buying Pan Am and A&P; employed Barry Diller, Michael Eisner, and Jeffrey Katzenberg; went into business with the Vatican; showed up on Richard Nixon's tapes ("I want him to be bled for a quarter of a million"); bought Madison Square Garden and its sports teams; assembled a billion-dollar investment portfolio; became the chum of Fidel Castro; built a Roman amphitheater on a Caribbean cliff top; and was investigated for an encyclopedia of malefactions by the Securities and Exchange Commission and *The New York Times*'s Seymour Hersh—both of whom came up with zip.

"My father," says his daughter, Dominique, "was kind of unique."

Charlie Bluhdorn was that, all right. What other Fortune 500 chief expressed approval by jumping up and down on his couch? Or had himself chauffeured in the front seat of a Honda Civic? Or headed off a discrimination lawsuit by noting that he employed nine of the highest-salaried African-Americans in the country—namely, the members of the New York Knicks?

And that was some of the smaller stuff.

There was also the time Charlie wanted to sue OPEC for anti-trust (good case, said the attorney general, but how to collect from Saddam Hussein?); the time he called the White House to say he'd handle the nuclear-arms talks with the Russian premier ("I know Brezhnev, I'm the one who can make a deal"); the time he punished the Shah of Iran for jacking up oil prices (no *Godfather* shows in your country, buddy, till Teheran ticket prices are upped the same percentage as OPEC's price hike). And then there was the time during the Yom Kippur War, when that year's Paramount president (Charlie went through a bunch) found him poring over maps of the Sinai, plotting an Israeli counterstrike. By the way, Charlie asked, "What's Yom Kippur?"

Everything about Charlie was one of a kind: the way he slept (two hours a night, the better to get a jump); the way he bought companies (look at a Standard & Poors sheet, pick up the phone); the way he needed it all done now—like the discotheque he wanted built in the Dominican Republic, where he owned 264,000 acres and most everything worthwhile. Called Frank Mancuso Jr., the son of Paramount's distribution honcho, about that disco one Thanksgiving; told him to build the planet's best and spend whatever—just get it in on time. When's that? asked Frank, whose qualification was being 19. Answered Charlie, "New Year's Eve." Lucky for Frank junior, he pulled it off.

But Charlie knew he would. He had instincts about people, which is why he hired Robert Evans to run his studio, when all Evans knew about movies was that he'd been in some bad ones. And what happened? Bob made ninth-out-of-eight Paramount No. 1. Charlie was the same about companies: "I buy things no one else wants." Then he turned them platinum.

Wall Street (and the Feds) never understood how "Engulf & Devour," as Mel Brooks satirized Gulf & Western in *Silent Movie,* did it, much less how Charlie connected the auto-parts foot bone to the motion-picture anklebone, and wound up, during the reign of the Conglomerate Kings, the most successful of them all. Charlie's speech didn't help. All manner of fractures occurred in that thick, spit-flying Viennese accent, so his remark to *Chinatown* screenwriter Robert Towne came out, "Ven are you goink to lite anuter movie for me, you plick?" Which Charlie meant as a compliment.

Truth be told, Charlie wasn't elucidative about a lot of things, including whether he was Jewish, which he kept Hollywood guessing about by posting a sentry outside the men's room door. (That, at least, can be settled here: Not Cut, according to a movieland wife with opportunity for close observation.)

One thing sure: Charlie lived for deals. "Some people like golf, Charlie liked to acquire things," says Motion Picture Association of America president Jack Valenti. "Making a deal to him was one orgasm after another."

By the testimony of friends (most enemies too), he was also a soft touch for a sob story, possessed of nary a mean bone, a wi

> **"Make pictures people want to see, not fancy-schmancy stuff. I want to see tears, laughs, beautiful girls . . . "**

outside the *D.S.M.* norm, and unabashed in his love for his adopted land.

"When I was a boy," he said, "it was like floating on a carpet to hear things about America."

He came and he conquered its most popular symbol, bringing Hollywood big business ownership, even as he ran his studio like the Mayers and Goldwyns.

"I really miss Charlie," says Peter Bogdanovich, whom Bluhdorn gave his directing start. "He liked movies, he liked quality, he liked good work. He was like an arc back to the old days."

"He really was a romantic business man," says Barry Diller, the last of his Paramount chiefs. "I'd never seen that before, and I've never seen it since."

This is his story. It only seems like a movie.

It opens in the *gemütlich* environs of Vienna, Austria, where, on September 20, 1926, Karl George Bluhdorn burst upon an unsuspecting world, the second and last child of Paul and Rosa Fuchs Bluhdorn. His father, who'd been born in Czechoslovakia, exported slippers from a factory he owned in Silesia, and life was comfortable for young Karl and sister Inge—until 1938, when Hitler showed up. Charlie's uncle warned them to flee: Paul, a Lutheran, might be O.K., but Rosa was a different story. Telling friends they were going on holiday, and leaving all behind, they traveled to Italy, crossed into France and made their way to Paris. The welcome to the City of Lights was the authorities barring the kids from school. So Inge wa

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THE MAD AUSTRIAN
Bluhdorn, center, with Dustin Hoffman, left, and Paramount chief Robert Evans at the party for Bluhdorn's 50th birthday at the Beverly Hilton.

...ce in America, Charlie—get-... possible to handle, anyway ... boarding school in London.

He arrived in time for the Blitz, and unable to speak word one of the English, a situation his father attempted to rectify by sending him letters written in only that. After curfew, Charlie tried to parse their meaning beneath his bed. His reward, when he was apprehended, was being caned.

France, meanwhile, was going the way of Austria, sending Charlie's parents to neutral Portugal, where they booked passage for New York in 1940. Their son followed two years later aboard the SS *Hilary*. The trip was no joke: U-boats sent half the ships in the convoy to the bottom.

On landing, October 29, 1942, Charlie told the F.B.I. that the "Karl" on his passport was history, and proclaimed himself, in the words of the bureau's report, "of the Hebrew race." After Rosa swore that her boy "will try to become a loyal American citizen," the holder of quota immigrant visa No. 275 was admitted to a new life.

"He really was a romantic businessman," says Barry Diller. "I'd never seen that before, and I've never seen it since."

By day, Charlie clerked in a cotton brokerage for $15 per week; by night, he took classes at City College. And, in 1945, he enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Force.

He did his basic in Golden, Colorado, home of Coors beer, a company he'd later try to acquire. Charlie was well acquainted with its product: the day his citizenship came through, he celebrated by getting drunk for the first time in his life. He recuperated in time to be shipped to Biloxi, Mississippi, where the army, being the army, elected to train nearsighted Private Bluhdorn as . . . a bombardier. Wisely, the Japanese surrendered before Charlie could get overseas.

He took a $60-a-week job at a one-room importer-exporter on discharge, and resumed his studies as a G.I. Bill night student at Columbia. But all the schooling Charlie needed was in a single book, Graham and Dodd's classic *Security Analysis*. He devoured it, underlining passages and writing notes to himself in the margins. When his boss went off on vacation he made his move. Out the buy and sell orders went, and in the money rolled—$1 million in business his first year.

By the time he was 21, he'd made a million for himself, and was on the verge of cornering the market in malt. Then the government slapped a limit on his quota. Furious, Charlie flew to Washington and barged into the office of the assistant secretary of commerce, the august David Bruce, later to be ambassador to the Court of St. James. "I told him to sit down and listen," *Life* writer Chris Welles recounts Bluhdorn saying, when Bruce tried to throw him out. Fifteen minutes later, Charlie was headed back to New York with a bigger quota.

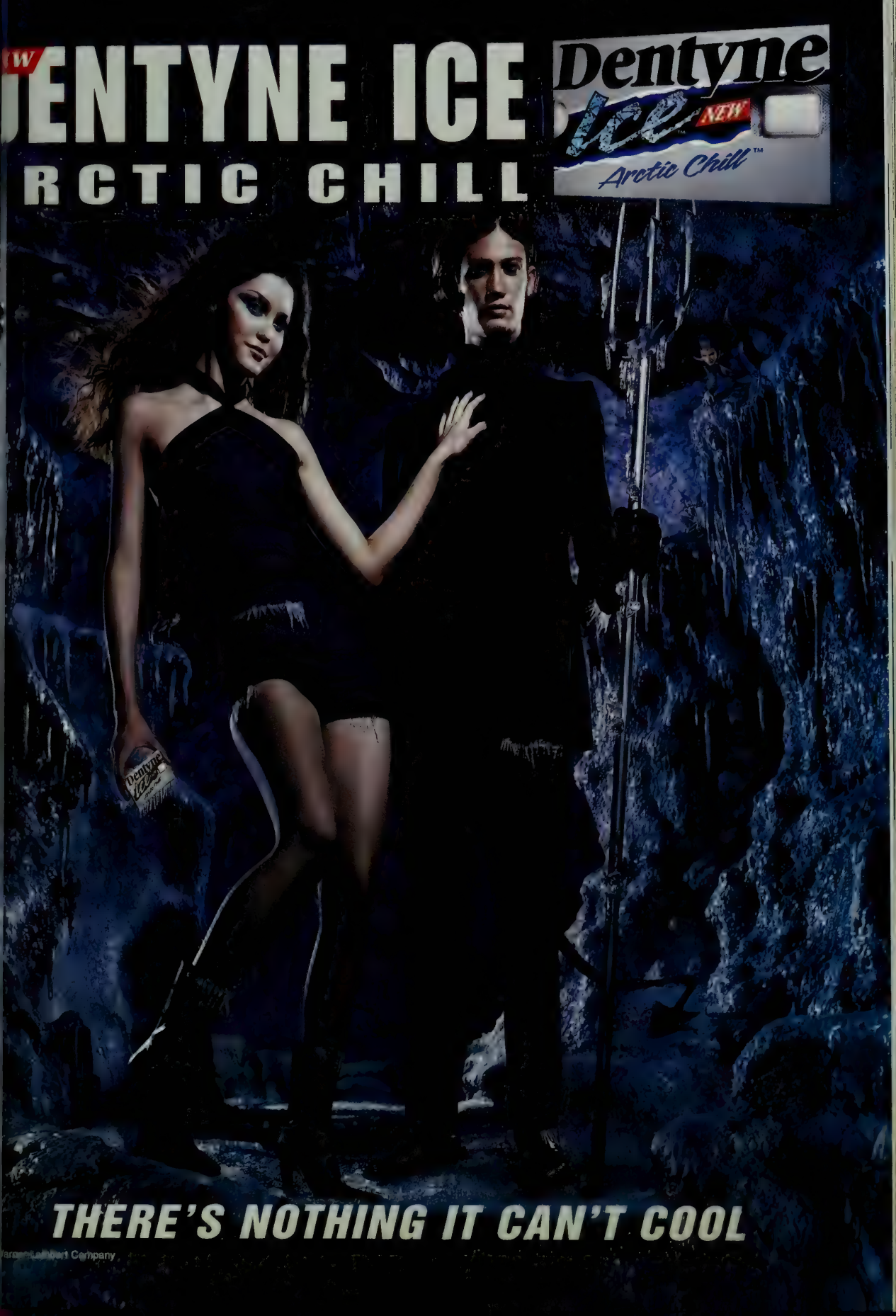
He went into business on his own two years later, speculating on commodities, and importing coffee at a $1-million-a-day clip. It was the highest of wire acts, and after 11 years Charlie—now married to a Parisian émigrée, Yvette Le Marrec, and a father—sought the lower altitudes of mortar and bricks. He found plenty in the Grand Rapids operations of Michigan Plating & Stamping, a three-years-in-row money loser, whose big contract was to produce rear bumpers for Studebakers. But the awfulness made it cheap, and with the backing of two businessmen friends, Charlie snapped up Michigan Plating & Stamping for $1 million in 1956. Two years later, he bought a small auto-parts distributor in Houston and gave his holdings a name: Gulf (after the proximity of the Texas company to Mexico's) & Western (for the one in Michigan, which was thataway from Manhattan).

By 1964, Charlie had gobbled u... more than two dozen such outfits a... was the largest, fastest-growing operat... in the car-parts biz. He'd also beg... wing spreading: a musical-instrumen... maker one day, a defense contractor... second, a baking company and a cha... of supermarkets a third. But those we... mere snacks. He really began tucki... in a year later, with the purchase ... New Jersey Zinc, bought with $84 m... lion of Chase Manhattan's money—th... the largest unsecured loan in U.S. histo... Charlie, whose treasury contained on... seventeenth that amount, got the cash ... less than a week. "The more you're arou... Bluhdorn," said New Jersey Zinc's pre... "the closer the moon is."

Time put him on its cover after tha... and the next year, 1966, about when Cha... lie started ingesting Dominican sugar pla... tations, he reached for dessert: Paramou...

That's when doubts began about whet... er the elevator of the chairman of Gu... & Western went all the way to the t... floor. For in the category of worst perf... mance by a studio, Paramount got all t... votes. It hadn't seen "boffo" in a tra... headline since *Psycho* in 1960. Adolp... Zukor, who'd founded the place when L... lian Gish was gracing the silent screen, w... still chairman emeritus; he was 93, and t... combined age of his top three lieutenan... was just shy of two centuries. Money? T... studio had been losing buckets immemo... ial. If that weren't damper enough o... jets, Paramount was then in the midst ... a takeover war masterminded by futu... Chris-Craft chairman Herbert J. Siegel.

But a well-placed bird had spoken ... Charlie, and what was imparted by pre...


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THE TEAM
From left, Paramount players Roman Polanski, Stuart Rosenberg, Robert Evans, Bernie Donenfeld, Sidney Furie, Jud Kinberg, and Silvio Narizzario in Evans's Paramount office, 1967.

"Some people like golf, Charlie liked to acquire things," says Jack Valenti. "Making a deal to him was one orgasm after another."

ent turned senior Paramount executive artin S. Davis was . . . interesting. To t, that moldering in the studio's vaults re films with a television-license value , oh, say, $200 million.

This intelligence produced a call from r. Bluhdorn to Mr. Siegel, and a sale to ulf & Western of the nine percent of ıramount owned by Herb and his part- r, Broadway producer Ernest Martin *low to Succeed in Business Without Real- Trying*). Once Charlie wolfed down the st of the assets, the total for owning ms such as *Sunset Boulevard* and *The ost Weekend* came to $165 million—about third of Paramount's actual worth. It asn't Charlie's biggest steal (Simon & huster, bought for $11 million in 1975, as doing $2 billion in sales two decades ter), but close.

Hollywood viewed the transaction dif- rently: "The biggest purchase for pussy the history of America," it was called. nd, to be sure, more than a pulchritudi- ous few would see ceilings in the hide- way Charlie maintained at a Central Park outh hostelry, where he'd once been a oorman. But that was only a fringe bene- t. What the immigrant refugee boy was ally getting was the ultimate American ream machine—and he, the former Karl luhdorn, was personally going to run it. aid Charlie, "I'm going to rebuild this hole goddamn town."

That would take a while, courtesy, in art, of blabbermouth Marty, who helped ring to the screen such detonations as *The dventurers,* a wide-screen epic one of his wizards decided to premiere aboard an airliner. Other big-ticket kabooms were in the works, including a favorite of Charlie's wife, Yvette, *Is Paris Burning?,* a three-hour, star-studded tale of the liberation of her hometown. While visiting the Paris set, Charlie ran into Siegel, who'd warned of what awaited mixing Orson Welles with the guy who'd played Auric Goldfinger as the Nazi hero. "You were right," said Charlie. "A disaster. I'm in there cutting."

"What the hell do you know about cutting a picture, for Christ's sake?" Siegel exclaimed.

Said Charlie, "I couldn't do any worse than what they're doing."

Nothing could hurt Paramount's costliest offering in years—or save it, either. The premiere party Charlie threw at the Eiffel Tower for *la toute France* was an omen: when the fireworks went off, the rains came down.

But on the arm of actress Leslie Caron that night was Charlie's salvation, a 36-year-old failed actor named Robert Evans.

Evans's C.V. was Hollywood classic: handsome junior rag-trade *macher* heads west and is discovered Beverly Hills Hotel poolside by local royalty Norma Shearer . . . plays part of Irving Thalberg, studio boy genius and Shearer husband died young, in Lon Chaney biopic *A Man of a Thousand Faces* . . . gossip-column liaisons (Lana Turner, Ava Gardner) and marriage-divorces (Sharon Hugueny, Camilla Sparv) follow, twinned with bullfighter part in Hemingway scribbler, *The Sun Also Rises* . . . pic gets gored, and bright promise dulls to "B"-picturedom in *The Fiend Who Walked the West* . . . new career begun as producer for Fox, where beguiling mien catches eye of *New York Times*-er Peter Bart . . . ensuing "next Thalberg" raves spotted by new Paramount topper . . . prepares to board London-bound plane as head of European operations.

The night of the Paris premiere, Evans had been on the job five months, mostly on the phone with Charlie. Two days after Bob got back to the Connaught, his phone rang again: Bluhdorn was making him studio boss.

"Go by the seat of your pants, Evans," Charlie instructed. "Make pictures people want to see, not fancy-schmancy stuff people don't understand. I want to see tears, laughs, beautiful girls—pictures people in Kansas City want to see."

Per Bluhdorn command, Evans set himself up in a French Regency number that had been Greta Garbo's Beverly Hills retreat, transforming the pool house into a state-of-the-art screening room for

The place was also handy for [illegible] of the sensitive sort, such as getting together Charlie hosted one noon [illegible] even of his fellow conglomerateurs. "The purpose of the lunch?" Evans writes in his autobiography, *The Kid Stays in the Picture*. "To architect the gobbling up of United States industry. Each one assured the others he would not infringe on their meals."

Allotting portions proved easier than restraining Charlie. Sometimes his impulses were good: Franco Zeffirelli's roof blower *Romeo and Juliet* was a Bluhdorn find, and absent his arm-twisting, Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau would have passed on *The Odd Couple*, Paramount's biggest since Chuck Heston brought the tablets down in *The Ten Commandments*. But Charlie could also be dangerous. "Don't listen to these assholes," he said to Mike Nichols, whose *Catch-22* budget had just been kiboshed by studio execs. Nichols gladly complied, unfortunately for Paramount, when ticket sales were summed.

"He began to scream at me about the money that actors were getting," remembers Warren Beatty, who screamed right back.

The presence of a good-looking woman could also spell trouble: pre-*Dynasty* Joan Collins came away from a party one night with a $75,000 deal, scrawled on a napkin. "And this is 1967," reminds agent Sue Mengers. "That's a lot of fucking money." And really hazardous was leaving Charlie unescorted in Europe; in one spate of Continental travels, he brought back 23 pictures—all of a sterlingness impossible to release.

But Charlie was nothing if not energetic; a year after he took over the studio, while the rest of the industry was lying in a TV-induced coma, Paramount had more pictures in production than at any time since the end of World War II. A few even wound up hits, none creepier than *Rosemary's Baby*, directed by a twisted Polish fellow Charlie had bumped into skiing at Gstaad—Roman Polanski.

Charlie also found time for a little shopping: Lucille Ball's Desilu television operation for the studio, and, in less than a year, 22 new acquisitions for Gulf & Western, including a cigar-maker, a breeder of Thoroughbred racehorses (tracks for them to run on would trot up momentarily), a ball-bearings manufacturer, a record label, a cable system or two, companies that turned out springs, dies, machine tools, all kinds of stuff nobody could make sense of except Charlie, who was now 69 on the Fortune 500—66 places higher than before scratching his latest itch.

All this new stuff required a box to put it in, and Charlie was building one 44 stories high on Columbus Circle in New York City, across from the phone booth where he'd called for his first job. "It will make the General Motors building look like peanuts!" he puffed. "It will be a landmark! A LANDMARK!"

Looming lonely and naked over Central Park, that the G&W building would be, though not as intended. A good breeze would start Charlie's glass-and-marble monument swaying, and when the wind really whipped, the lean on upper floors could be several feet, sending drawers sliding from file cabinets, popping windows from frames, and making urinal use an adventure.

The one place that was pretty secure was the basement, which was supposed to have been the garage, until Charlie decided on a movie theater. A whoopsie during design, however, failed to account for the subway lines that ran beneath the site. So the soundtrack was the rumble of the A and C trains, which finally got fixed by ripping everything out, then putting it back in a giant, rubber cocoon. The only remaining hitch, says Paramount finance executive Art Barron, was finding someone to tell Charlie that the studio's flagship now had the highest per-seat cost in the world.

But there were larger migraines, lead of the list Charlie's seeing Julie Andrews sing her heart out, get the guy, and outwit the Nazis in dear old Österreich. "*The Sound of Music* was his favorite all-time film," says Dominique Bluhdorn, who with brother Paul endured their father's endless screenings. "It was the way we grew up."

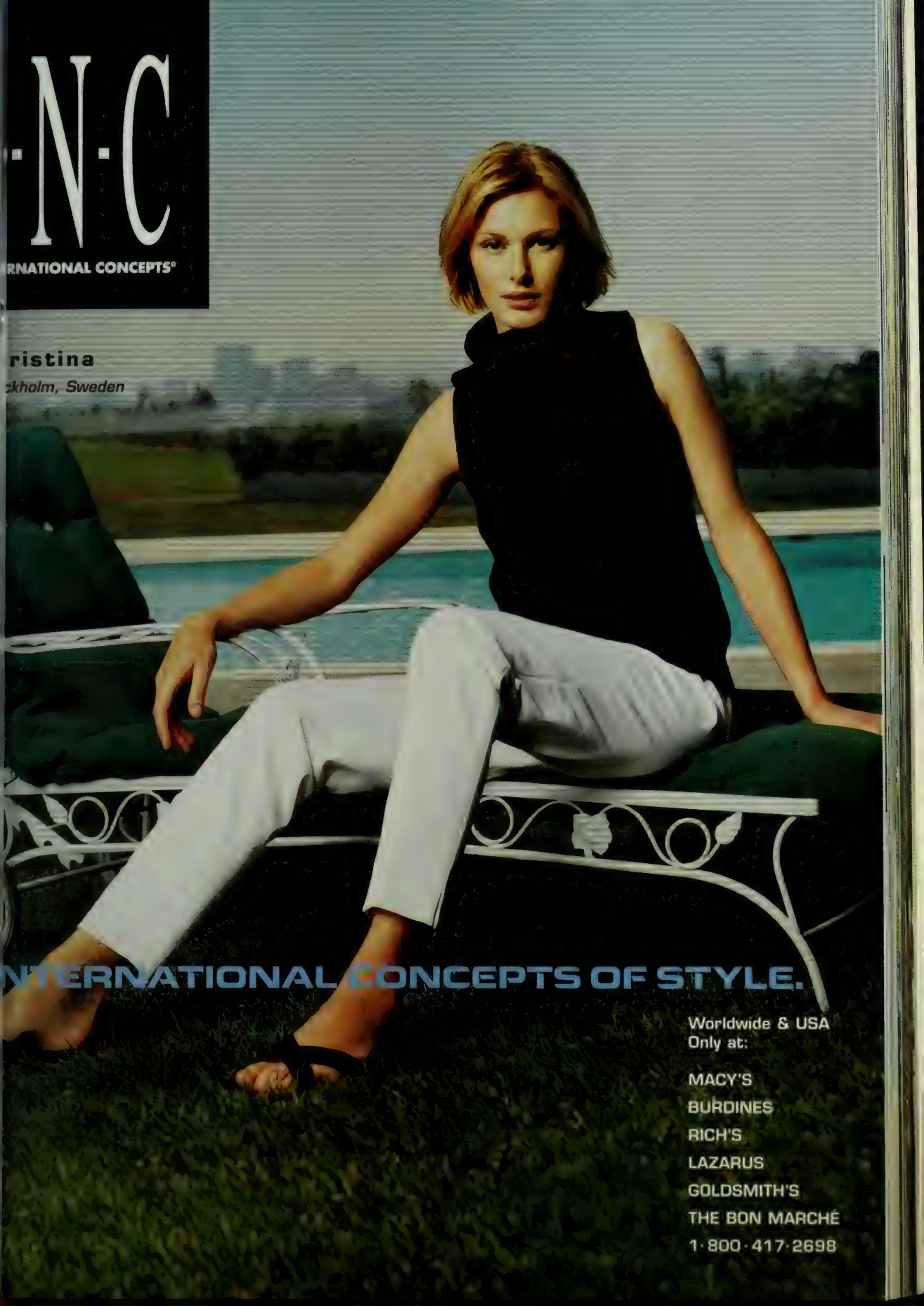
Lee Marvin croaking with Clint Eastwood in a Cascades Western wasn't Maria making the Alps come alive. But a script based on the Lerner and Loewe Broadway musical *Paint Your Wagon* was the nearest approximation bequeathed by the *ancien régime*. Overriding Evans's objections, Charlie pushed the project through, resulting in half a year spent in the Oregon mud; Marvin drunk for a solid month and director Joshua Logan nodding out on lithium during takes. The dénouement was French novelist Romain Gary arriving on set, discovering wife Jean Seberg bunking with Clint, and challenging him cuckolder to a duel. "Charlie was taking it in with wide-eyed fascination," says Karen Lerner, wife at the time of *Paint Your Wagon*'s producer-lyricist, the late Alan Jay. "He probably thought this was the way every movie was." Then the bill came in: $40 million.

Undeterred, Charlie poked through the turnaround pile and happened on a romantic comedy about a World War I flying ace who falls for a German spy. "Add 12 songs to it, then put Julie Andrews into the mix to sing them, and we've got ourselves a musical!" he enthused to Evans. "I mean a *musical!*"

Thus sprung was *Darling Lili*, Rock Hudson starring as Julie's love interest, and, in real-life role of director and Ms. Andrews' husband, Blake Edwards. He hadn't been crazy about Charlie since working on a script called *Lover Man*, and the arrival of a fiat casting Doris Day as lead. Great gal Doris, except *Lover Man* was the Billie Holiday story. Relations failed to improve when, during early shooting of *Darling Lili* outside Paris, a scene was interrupted by a high-pitched rasp bellowing, "Vy isn't she sink-ink?" Edwards tried to explain that his wife wasn't supposed to yet. "I'm making a musical!" stormed Charlie. "I vant to hear Julie Andrews sink!"

Bad turned worse when the production moved to Ireland for the flying scenes. The leprechaun was the clime, which perversely followed up the usual dank with eight straight days of sun, making it impossible to match shots, grinding filming to a halt. When Charlie showed up to check things out, he found the crew playing Frisbee. The final straw was when Charlie was being driven through the emerald countryside and spotted an enormous castle rising up over the moors. "Who lives there?" he asked. "Blake Edwards" was the reply.

By the time it was over, Charlie was having screaming fits with Edwards over the phone ("Get out of my office!" he shrieked from New York, when the director was in California), and Edwards was inviting Evans to settle artistic differences by stepping outside. As for critically lambasted *Darling Lili*, it wound up with $3.5 million in receipts and total costs put north of $40 million. If the loss stood, heaping ca-ca would register for fiscal '69. The prospect was such that Paramount's chief financial officer recommended locking the gates. Instead, Charlie parted ways with the C.F.O. and struck a deal with min


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"Do you know what's the best insurance policy that guarantees continued breathing?" said Paramount *consigliere* Sidney Korshak. "Silence."



THE TURNAROUND *Top,* lyricist Alan Lerner, Evans, and Bluhdorn meet at Paramount, 1966. *Right,* Bluhdorn, seated, on the Little Italy set of *The Godfather,* with wife Yvette and Francis Ford Coppola, 1971.

conglomerate Commonwealth United, swapping $12 million in cash and half of any profits ever realized by *Darling Lili* for a package of Commonwealth United paper with a face value of more than $30 million. *Darling Lili* never returned a dime. But, then, neither did Commonwealth United, which defaulted on its debentures in August 1970.

Charlie, however, had already found another rescuer—Michele Sindona, a Virgil- and Cicero-quoting Sicilian financier, whose clients ranged from the Mafia (Sindona did their heroin-profit laundry) to the Vatican, where, courtesy of an old pal from Milan, Pope Paul VI, he oversaw the church's billions in investments. Just how Sindona made Charlie's acquaintance is murky. But by 1968, as *Vanity Fair* contributing editor Nick Tosches records in *Power on Earth: Michele Sindona's Explosive Story,* they were doing their first deal, a sale to Gulf & Western of Sindona's controlling interest in a New Hampshire paper company. The one Charlie did this time was a doozy: the next-to-worthless Commonwealth United paper in exchange for a 10.5 percent interest in Società Generale Immobiliare (S.G.I.), the Vatican's real-estate-and-development empire, whose holdings (including the Watergate) were among the largest in the world. Said Sindona, "I always sell a company for less than it is worth to someone I want to please."

Charlie was tickled pink, and with Paramount still hurting, in June 1970 he sold S.G.I. a half-interest in the studio's storied 52-acre lot. What would replace the stages was unsettled, though one notion was a cemetery—*bellissima* for Sindona: *sindone* is Italian for "funeral shroud."

Hollywood paid less attention to Paramount's new partner than it did to Charlie's fulminations on the industry. "Some artists think it is uncreative to have a business sense, that protecting truth is a license to steal and to spend and do anything for the sake of art," he railed during a lengthy diatribe to *Life.* "Well," said Charlie, "who needs them?"

The attitude did not endear him to Warren Beatty, who got into a shouting match with Charlie over the phone from London. "He began to scream at me about the money that actors were getting," remembers Beatty, who, egged on by the knowledge that Charlie was performing for a roomful of execs, screamed right back even louder. "I nearly lost my voice. The person who was three floors above came downstairs thinking that there had been a burglary or a robbery. I said, 'No, it's just Bluhdorn.'"

Charlie was oblivious. For the moment, he'd saved Paramount, which, under his orders to "turn into the Vietcong and live off the land," was now ensconced in a few thousand feet of office space on North Canon Drive in Beverly Hills. The new digs were swell with Evans, who coul stroll to the Bistro, daily lunch place the lawyer he called "my *consigliere,*" Si ney Korshak. Unsmiling Sidney was presence in town, where his annual Chris mas do was a must for such as "ver good personal friend" Lew Wasserma chairman of MCA. He was equally r doubtable in Vegas, where Jimmy Hof let him have his suite in the Riviera o night, and in his native Chicago, where h made his bones doing odd jobs for asso ates of "Big Al," as in Capone.

Korshak's chores for Paramount wer very quiet, and, as Peter Bart was to lear he expected like discretion. Believing th studio's life expectancy short, Bart, who come over from the *Times* to right-han Evans, had been keeping detailed not against the day when the doors shut. The Sidney passed some friendly advice. "P ter," he said, "do you know what's th best insurance policy in the world that a solutely guarantees continued breathing? Bart was stumped. "Silence," Sidney sai Bart burned his notes.

Charlie, who had Sidney's kid produ

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...ia Levine Is Dead and Living in ... partook of his wisdom as well. ... dubbed like girls on the phone, and ... Charlie got into a scrape with MGM ... Kirk Kerkorian over the price of some assets Charlie and Lew were buying for a film company they'd set up overseas, where the governments weren't so picky about anti-trust, Sidney was Mr. Fix-It. Calmed Charlie down, got Kirk his dough. Wouldn't have happened without him, Charlie said.

But a few things even Sidney couldn't grease, and one was Charlie's board; with the red ink still rising in the fall of 1970, it wanted Gulf & Western out of the picture business. "We need a miracle, not a movie," Charlie told Evans. Evans gave him both in a week: a short subject for board viewing, directed by friend Mike Nichols and featuring Bob, laying out the glories of a film opening that Christmas. Starring the new Mrs. Evans, Ali MacGraw, and Ryan O'Neal of *Peyton Place* renown, it was based on a lowball script from a Yale professor named Erich Segal. During production, Segal turned the pages into a small novel, which was now No. 1, hardcover and soft. The camera pulled in tight as, with a Nichols-directed thoughtful pause, Evans delivered the rim shot: "*Love Story* ... it's what life and love and Christmas is all about."

It was Evans's finest performance. The board called off the execution, and, Christmas weekend, *Love Story* grossed more than any movie in history. As the first of nearly $100 million in tickets were spitting out, Bob took Charlie outside to give him a present. They turned around, and, while snowflakes fell on them, the windows of the great, darkened shaft that was the Gulf & Western building lit up, spelling L-O-V-E S-T-O-R-Y in 12-story letters. "America! That's my building!" Charlie burbled, throwing his arms around Evans. "It's the first real Christmas I've ever had."

Evans had an even better gift two years later, a movie of a Paramount-financed novel, written by Mario Puzo. Its name was *The Godfather,* and the agita Charlie caused making it would have suited Sonny Corleone.

For starters, he wasn't wowed by Francis Ford Coppola, whose *Finian's Rainbow* he assessed "disgusting piece of shit." He also had ideas about who should play Michael "that kid on the bench," he called him, Ryan O'Neal, who was mournfully perched on one at *Love Story*'s end. And "crazy guy" Marlon Brando as the Don, Charlie didn't want to hear about. He wanted the guy who wakes up in bed with the horse's head.

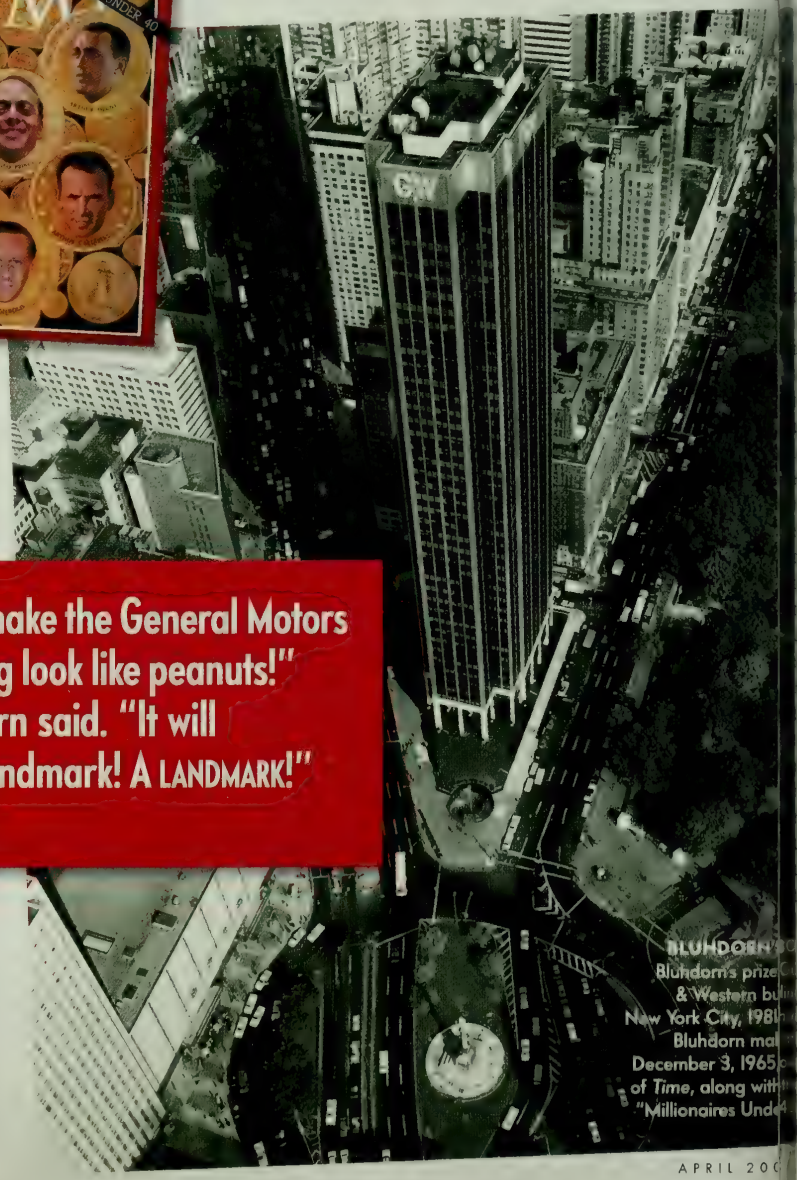
Second thoughts and "Fuck you"s straightened all that out, and Charlie had to content himself with hiring the producer Al Ruddy. He had accomplished something very few others had at Paramount in recent memory, which was to bring in a picture under budget. Never mind that *Little Fauss and Big Halsy* was so bad even Robert Redford couldn't salvage it. To Charlie that made him the "greatest producer in Hollywood."

Ruddy had a problem, however: Al Pa... no, whom they'd finally settled on as M... chael, had signed to do a picture at Met... which wouldn't cut him loose. Enter B... and Charlie's pal Sidney, who made a c... to his pal Kirk, who was experiencin... wouldn't you know, difficulties putting ... the MGM Grand in Vegas. Sidney ask... one question: "Wanna finish your hotel... And Al was back to being Michael.

The next "however" came from fo... named Colombo, who weren't rolling bo... cie balls over Charlie's putting the Fam... enterprise on the screen. Their annoyan... was conveyed to Evans via anonymo... caller, who advised, "When we kill a fuc... ing snake, we chop off the head." Wishi... his to remain as is, Bob sent Ruddy for... sit-down with the boys. Promises we... made, the "or else"s ceased, and the *Go... father* set began filling up with bent-nos...



"It will make the General Motors building look like peanuts!" Bluhdorn said. "It will be a landmark! A LANDMARK!"



BLUHDORN'S ... Bluhdorn's prize ... & Western bu... New York City, 198... Bluhdorn ma... December 3, 1965 ... of *Time*, along with ... "Millionaires Und...

o didn't look like extras. When news of se developments surfaced in *The New k Times,* sending Gulf & Western's share ce into the dumper, Charlie sent for ddy, who arrived to find bonhomie re- ced by spittle flecking lips.

"You fucked my company!" Charlie ired. "I'm trying to go legit all these irs, and look what's happening. The ıfia moves in!"

"You think I'm going to stand here and ologize for any fucking thing I did, ı're mistaken," Ruddy returned. "I'll my money and my points, and I'll see ı . . . around."

With that, Ruddy grabbed 15 fat cigars m Charlie's humidor and stalked out. Charlie put him back on the picture be- e the day was out.

rom then on, *The Godfather* went swim- mingly by Paramount standards, Char- lie causing only one more stink—over e of his record companies' new rumba ies that he wanted in the score. Informed proposed synergy wasn't apropos for a riod piece about Italians, Charlie glared Evans and Coppola. "I'm putting up all e money and still I have to deal with ists telling me what music?" Yes, that s about the size of it. Exit Charlie, fling- ; rumba record across room.

The only spoilsport following the pre- ere was Michele Sindona. "Every Ital- ı who is sent to jail in this country is ing to get an extra five years on account that stupid fairy tale," Tosches quotes n bitching to Charlie in *Power on Earth.* ıarlie laughed: "That's entertainment."

It was, big time, for Paramount, which llected a best-picture Oscar for *The God- ther* and $86.2 million in first-run do- estic rentals on a film made for less an six. Paramount was now No. 1, and th the hundreds of millions more to me from overseas and re-releases, the ıdio's future was assured. That of its esident was another matter.

Bald, bilious Stanley Jaffe had started ell with Charlie, who fell in love with him e night his Ali MacGraw and Richard enjamin starrer, *Goodbye, Columbus*—a re Paramount bright spot in 1969—pre- iered at Manhattan's Loew's Tower East. athering producer Stanley in a bear hug ıtside the theater, Charlie said to Jaffe's ther, Leo, then boss at Columbia, "You t him back over my dead body."

The romance continued to pollinate, and ter packing Marty Davis off to supervise ulf & Western press and investor rela- ons, Charlie named Jaffe Paramount pres- ent in July 1970. He was then 29, and, ys a senior studio executive, "very shy."

Working with Bluhdorn soon cured that. Stanley was even more of a yeller and screamer than Charlie," says Peter Bart. "They would sometimes stand insulting each other at the top of their lungs. It was fun. Better than theater." Stanley thought it the key to success. "You know why I get along so well with Charlie?" he said to Ruddy. "I'm the only guy who can tell him to go fuck himself."

But even Charlie had his limits, and 10 months after taking over the presidency, Stanley exceeded them, during a discussion with Evans about whom to cast as the lead in *Star Spangled Girl.* As possibilities were being tossed about, Charlie threw in Joanna Cameron, an unknown he'd met lunching at the Bistro and thought could be the next Natalie Wood.

"We're running this company," hissed Jaffe. "Stay out of it."

Charlie got very quiet, an ominous portent. "Tell him to apologize," he instructed Evans that night. Evans tried, Jaffe wouldn't, and three days later, no more Stanley. To replace him, Charlie went after Steve Frankfurt, the 29-year-old creative chief of advertising giant Young & Rubicam. They'd first met when Frankfurt was devising the *Rosemary's Baby* campaign, a press grabber that featured stenciling PRAY FOR ROSEMARY'S BABY all over New York—including the steps of St. Patrick's Cathedral. Their bond was cemented when Frankfurt unveiled the poster for *Goodbye, Columbus,* which showed a soft-focus Ali MacGraw contemplating a rose. EVERY FATHER'S DAUGHTER IS A VIRGIN, read the legend beneath. Charlie studied it and spun on his heels. When he turned back, his cheeks were soaked.

To persuade Frankfurt to come to Paramount, Charlie took him to his favorite restaurant—the Papaya stand at 86th and Third. The dogs heaping with kraut were tasty (Charlie usually had four of them), Frankfurt's answer wasn't: he liked Y&R. "How much would it cost me to buy it?" Charlie asked. "Charles," said Frankfurt, stupefied, "it's the second-largest advertising agency in the world." Charlie shrugged. "I don't care. It's a nice business. I get the agency, I get you."

Despite repeated tries, Charlie got neither, and Paramount's new president was Frank Yablans, a Brooklyn cabdriver's son who'd been wonder-working in the marketing department, part by smarts, part by threats. "Balls?" said Evans. "Jimmy Hoffa took a backseat."

The *cojones* were soon on display for Bluhdorn. "You're going to fucking die," said Yablans, interrupting a trademark tirade in a room full of executives. "You're going to have a heart attack, and I'm going to tell you, Charlie, you're not going to give me one, 'cause I don't really give a fuck what you have to say right now."

Seeing something of himself in up-from-nowhere Frank, Charlie put up with the guff and called him one day to relate how he'd just heard from President Nixon, who was staying at the Plaza and had asked him to come over. "I told him, 'No way,'" Charlie crowed. "'You want to see me, see me at the Gulf & Western building.'" Some time later, Yablans pulled the same stunt on Henry Ford II. "You crazy fucking moron!" Charlie yelled, bursting into his office. "Are you out of your mind?" "Wait a minute," Frank said. "I told Ford what you told Nixon, and he's not as big as Nixon." "Oh yeah?" said Charlie. "How many bumpers do you think I sell Nixon?"

"I'm trying to go legit, and look what's happening. The Mafia moves in!" Bluhdorn roared at *Godfather* producer Al Ruddy.

They had another spat when Frank responded to a Charlie summons and found him in the hottie company of Francis Coppola, Peter Bogdanovich, and William Friedkin—Paramount's new partners, he was informed, in a Charlie brainstorm called the Directors' Company. The way it'd work, Charlie explained, was that they could make any picture they wanted as long as the budget didn't bust three mil. Then they'd all split the pot, Paramount and the boys. It was, Charlie said, "an impossible dream." "Charlie," said Frank, "that's not an impossible dream, this is the greatest nightmare and you're out of your fucking mind." He went on from there, insulting Coppola and Friedkin, who jumped up, yelling back, chorused by Charlie, screaming, "Cut it out, Frank! Cut it out!"

Turned out, Frank was right. Francis did O.K. (though not at the box office) with *The Conversation,* and Peter great with *Paper Moon* (though not with *Daisy Miller*), but Billy, already tied up with *The*

I can't, wound up doing *bubkes*. End, impossible dream, Charlie; begin, new chapter, Yablans.

But, like Stanley before him, Frank kept stretching the envelope, letting reporters know that Charlie was just a pest, and that he, Frank, was planning to be president (of the U.S., that is). In the meantime, he had Mama Yablans on the payroll and, without telling Charlie, was in rehearsals to play a hood in Elaine May's *Mikey and Nicky*.

As the meshuggaas mounted, Charlie began casting covetous eyes on a young ABC television executive named Barry Diller.

They'd become acquainted shortly after the purchase of Paramount, when Charlie licensed *dreck*-drenched shelves of the studio's library to ABC chairman Leonard Goldenson. Not delighted, Barry, who was programming the network's *Movie of the Week*, called Charlie. "I know you have had this discussion with Mr. Goldenson," Diller opened, "and I know you *think* that you have sold ABC all these movies." At which point, Charlie went Bellevue. "You can scream all you like," said Diller, then 23, "but we ain't buying these movies." To which Bluhdorn retorted, "I'm coming over there right now." He did, and after more screaming, Charlie and the self-described "wiseass kid" achieved détente. Says Diller, "From that moment, of course, Bluhdorn loved me, because I was just so impossible."

Over the next eight years, Charlie and Barry had many confabs, always following the same script: lunch out of a paper bag in Diller's office, two hours of peak-decibel recriminations, then a laugh, a handshake, and a deal. As the friendship warmed, Charlie dangled a senior position in Paramount's television operations. "You must be nuts," said Diller. "Work for Frank Yablans? I'd rather work for the waiter."

Blandishments wouldn't budge him, even as Charlie's relations with Yablans added new scenes to *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* At one point, after Bluhdorn tried to reopen a deal Yablans had struck with NBC, selling the television rights to *The Godfather* for an unheard-of $10 million, Yablans said, "Charlie, you should have a new crest made: two crossed pushcarts. Because that's what you are—a peddler." On another occasion, Yablans arrived at Charlie's lavish new spread in th Dominican and was greeted by a visitin millionaire, who said, "Charlie tells m you're the guy I should see if I need girls Snapped Yablans, "The one in charge o pimping in this country is Charlie Blul dorn." The story made its way to Yvett who sent Yablans a case of mouthwas Attached was a note: "This is from Cha lie." Frank reciprocated with a case of to let paper. His note read: "This is for yo Charlie. Let him clean up his own sh next time."

But the thing that ultimately tore it w money, a commodity Charlie employe to control both Yablans and Evans, wh were collecting $400,000 salaries bu without the bonuses that were industr norm. There'd been battles over the sub ject, but new contracts in 1974 seemed t resolve them. Evans's deal was especiall generous, allowing him to produce a pi ture a year for Paramount, even as h continued to head the studio. Evans, hov ever, was chronically broke, and talke Bluhdorn into giving him a $500,00 interest-free compan loan. Yablans thereupo demanded one of h own. The showdow writer Peter Biskind r ports in *Easy Rider Raging Bulls: How th Sex, Drugs and Rock Roll Generation Save Hollywood,* came durin a dinner at a New Yor steak house to celebrat

"I'm going to build something here like nobody's ever seen," Bluhdorn said, and named it right then: "Los Altos."



CHARLIE'S PARADISE Bluhdorn's $30 million Los Altos compound in the Dominican Republic. *Inset*, his Roman-style amphitheater soon after its completion in 1982.


I'm still standing.
Want strong bones?
Drinking enough
lowfat milk
now can help prevent
osteoporosis later.
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A HAPPY BUSINESSMAN. Bluhdorn with New Jersey Zinc head Ross McCann, Connecticut, 1966. He gobbled up New Jersey Zinc and roughly 150 other companies during his vigorous career.

the picture of Evans's first independent production, Roman Polanski's [illegible] Nicholson starrer, *Chinatown*. When Bluhdorn toasted their partnership, Yablans snarled, "Charlie . . . there are haves and have-nots in the world. You're a have, and I'm a have-not. So don't give me this partnership shit."

"O.K.," Charlie said to Diller afterward. "You have finally done it to me. I am going to make you chairman of Paramount. You deal with them."

Diller accepted, but, Charlie being Charlie, negotiations weren't done yet. "You can't fire Frank—I won't pay his contract." Diller surmounted that by having all executives who'd answered to Yablans now report to him: "Firing by process" in Dillerspeak. Frank got the message in six weeks.

Next out the door was Evans, who'd taken Paramount to the top, and, on account of Charlie, suffered mightily en route. "It was like a man and wife situation," says Evans. "Me, unfortunately, being the wife."

At times, Charlie could be sweet, such as the day he learned that Ali's treasured Scottie had been killed, and broke off a meeting on Paramount's future to race to a kennel to get her another. But there were all those calls. "Goddamn it, Bob," Ali had said, at the umpteenth dinner-hour intrusion. "Can't we just have 20 minutes?" Ali wasn't complaining anymore; while Bob was doing God's work on *The Godfather* 20 hours a day, she'd been carried off by her co-star in *The Getaway,* Steve McQueen. Now Charlie really was his mate, and Bob needed a scene change. At a welcoming breakfast at the Bel-Air Hotel, Barry provided.

Having met its match, the Securities and Exchange Commission concluded five years of investigating by dropping all charges against Charles G. Bluhdorn.

"Let's get something straight," Diller said. "We're not partners. You work for me. Is that clear?" It was to Evans, who traded captaincy of the studio for a restructured production deal on the spot. But life without Charlie calling was not to be kind. Evans would get deep into coke; be busted buying felony weight; marry and divorce Miss America Phyllis George; then have it all come apart during the making of *The Cotton Club,* a $48 million self-immolation that saw Evans grilled about the bumping off of his co-producer. After wearing out the Fifth on the stand, Evans wrote his memoirs. Of Charlie, he said, only too truly, "He had more shrewdness in his toenail than I had in my entire body."

Diller, meanwhile, was beginning to wonder what he'd gotten himself into. His new charges treating him, as he puts it, "as a dog does a fire hydrant." Worse, apart from *The Godfather, Part II,* which Charlie had hounded Coppola into making, Yablans and company had left the production pipeline parched. To get it flowing, Diller brought in David Picker, former production chief of United Artists. However, Picker proved too deliberate at pump-priming, and during his tenure, Paramount, on the strength of such offerings as *Won Ton Ton, the Dog Who Saved Hollywood,* took up residence in last place—which elicited the predictable from Charlie. "He was not pleasant," says Diller, who offered to quit. "He was horrible."

Charlie's mood didn't brighten when the studio passed on friend Milos Forman's *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*—best picture for 1975. Bluhdorn blood boiled again after screening *Rocky,* best picture the following year. "This is it!" he shouted. "You guys are so far from the dream, you don't get it."

But Diller had plans, starting with a notion Coppola had given him as they were finalizing *The Godfather, Part II*



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with Cagney as Jewish gangster Hyman Roth (Lee Strasberg played the role). "What you should do is go reclaim the lot," Francis advised. "That's what this business is. It's history." Said Barry, "Wow!"

Paramount's Italian partners, who'd been using a shadow company to produce porno flicks on the stages, were glad to be rid of the joint, whose development was restricted by local covenant—a fact that Charlie had apparently neglected to mention. Nor was Sindona in a position to quibble when Charlie offered a fire-sale price: he was facing indictment on 68 counts of fraud in connection with the collapse of New York's Franklin National Bank, the biggest bank failure in U.S. history. In an attempt to beat the rap, Sindona would stage his own kidnapping, assisted by the Mob and a friendly doctor, who added verisimilitude by shooting him in the leg. The ruse failed to fool, however, and after being sentenced to a quarter-century in the pen, Sindona was extradited to Italy. There, he drew a life stretch for commissioning one William "Billy the Exterminator" Arico to whack a nosy bank examiner. Two days after sentencing, Sindona's saga wound its last reel, when someone sweetened his jailhouse coffee with cyanide.

> "Some artists think it is uncreative to have a business sense," Bluhdorn railed. "Well, who needs them?"

Back at Paramount, Diller was marking the return to the lot by inviting Charlie out for an inspection tour. Problem was, Charlie wanted to stay at the Beverly Hills Hotel, from whose palm-fringed premises he'd been banned three years previously for behaving like, well, Charlie. Into the breach stepped a diminutive former aide to New York mayor John Lindsay, whom Picker had enticed from lucrative, if dicey, living card-counting at blackjack. His name was Jeffrey Katzenberg. Alias "the Golden Retriever," Katzenberg was famed for solving the unsolvable, and so he did with Charlie's lodging conundrum. Step one was collecting 50 $100 bills from petty cash. Step two was presenting himself to the hotel manager and beginning to count; at 25, Charlie had his reservation. Step three was dispensing the remaining bundle to anyone Bluhdorn might conceivably encounter during his one-week stay. That done, Jeffrey went to pick up Charlie, who was amazed when, before he'd put down the hotel phone, room service was knocking with his English muffin. "I guess the service has just gotten much better," said Jeffrey.

The only ripple the rest of the week was when Katzenberg took Bluhdorn to a demonstration of a high-tech amusement ride Paramount was backing. Alighting from the contraption, Charlie commenced pacing, as a dozen executives and technicians sweatily awaited his reaction. Then, says Katzenberg, "he starts screaming, 'This is the most unbelievable thing I have ever seen! This is going to be bigger than General Motors! This is going to be bigger than AT&T! This is going to change America!'"

Katzenberg dissolved in hysterics. "Vaht are you laughing at!" Charlie spit, bringing himself nose to nose with the brash 23-year-old. "Well, Mr. Bluhdorn," said Katzenberg, "it's just a ride." Bluhdorn glowered menacingly. "There is foam coming out of his mouth," Katzenberg says. "The vein in his neck is literally pulsating.... Everybody is waiting to see if this man is going to reach over and just put his hand around my throat and kill me." Charlie took a long breath, as if considering it, then broke into a big, teeth-baring grin. "I like this boy," he said.

Charlie was also beginning to appreciate what was going on at Paramount, where Diller was replacing seat-of-the-pants with audience research. He'd also made a number of personnel moves, most notably, installing Michael Eisner, an old programming colleague from ABC, as Paramount president. Upon his first pilgrimage to the Dominican Republic, Eisner records in his autobiography, *Work in Progress,* he was greeted by Charlie, who dropped to his knees on the tarmac, proclaiming, "My savior has come." Charlie then escorted him to his icy sitz bath for an hours-long *tour d'horizon,* including an idea he had for a picture: Sitting Bull meets Hitler. "We ought to get Dustin Hoffman involved," he said —whether as *Führer* or chief wasn't specified. While Eisner was digesting that notion, Charlie served up another: A *Bad News Bears* sequel set in Cuba, with [illegible] less than Fidel Castro smacking the w[illegible] ning home run. Eisner averred that Fid[illegible] then past 50, might not be in the sa[illegible] shape as he had been pre-revolution, pl[illegible] ing semi-pro ball. Charlie wasn't put off; Eisner wouldn't run with it, he wou[illegible] pitch Castro himself.

By and by, a meeting was arrange[illegible] but on arrival in Havana, Charlie and h[illegible] party were left cooling their heels f[illegible] hours, with no sign of El Líder. Night fe[illegible] still no Fidel. "Rolando, get the pilo[illegible] we're leaving," Bluhdorn ordered Rolan[illegible] Bunster, head of Gulf & Western's Lati[illegible] American operations and translator [illegible] the trip. Bunster persuaded him to ha[illegible] on, but barely. "Charlie," he says, "is g[illegible] ting more impatient by the second. H[illegible] ready to go through the roof." Finally, [illegible] 9:30, a military aide showed up to co[illegible] duct them to the Presidential Palac[illegible] "There is nothing at the entrance ... n[illegible] one soldier, not one guard," Bunster [illegible] calls. "We go downstairs and see a mi[illegible] tary guy, who takes us through this tu[illegible] nel. All of a sudden, we come to a roo[illegible] knock on the door, the door opens, a[illegible] there's Fidel."

Castro immediately turned on t[illegible] charm. "I know you've asked to see me[illegible] he said, "but I'm very upset, because[illegible] just read in the newspaper that that Dav[illegible] Frost paid Nixon $1 million for an int[illegible] view. I had Gina Lollobrigida here to i[illegible] terview me, and she didn't pay me an[illegible] thing." Charlie pulled out a wad of $1[illegible] bills: "I'm paying." "The only way I'[illegible] going to take money from you," Cast[illegible] replied, "is if you autograph it." Bluhdo[illegible] took a note and scribbled: "All my be[illegible] wishes, in hopes that this $100 bill w[illegible] help us become friends." When Charl[illegible] asked for an autograph in turn, Cast[illegible] wrote: "To my friend, Charlie, knowi[illegible] that by me signing this $100 bill I a[illegible] helping to strengthen the American cu[illegible] rency by taking it out of circulation."

It was the start of a nonstop, seve[illegible] and-a-half-hour conversation, the arc[illegible] capitalist and arch-Communist batting ba[illegible] monologues, half an hour and more at[illegible] stretch. Initially, the tone was testy, Blu[illegible] dorn commanding Bunster, "Please t[illegible] President Castro that I am a fervent an[illegible] Communist, that I hate anything Co[illegible] munist, that I can't stand Communis[illegible] and it's the worst thing that's ever ha[illegible] pened to anyone in the world." But aft[illegible] that, Charlie and Fidel got on like o[illegible] buds, covering sugar production, bus[illegible] ness opportunities, artistic royalti[illegible] (Charlie wanted his for pirated Par[illegible] mount pix, Fidel his for the speech[illegible] that Simon & Schuster was selling). [illegible] the time it was over, dawn was breakin[illegible]





FOR THOSE WHO KNOW.



ONLY A FEW HAVE EXPERIENCED THE MAGIC OF LA GRANDE DAME.
THE CLASSIC CHAMPAGNE IN A MOST SOPHISTICATED PERFORMANCE.

...was weighing beating the Bears. ... Cuban exiles blew up something, and the Bears went to Tokyo, not Havana. Paramount did just fine, however. By 1978, Diller again had the studio first, and Paramount would continue to be a top-three moneymaker year after year. Charlie's paw prints were on every one of them; all that altered was the identity of the executive on the other end of his calls: Barry first; then, when he tired, Michael; then, when *he* wearied, Jeffrey, who became production chief after getting Leonard Nimoy to wear ears again for *Star Trek*. "He literally would call every weekend and spend three hours on the telephone, pitching ideas, each idea nuttier and nuttier than the last," says Katzenberg, "and, believe me, they were out there."

One of the furthest was a movie about a terrorist who brings a grapefruit-size H-bomb into Manhattan. Research found nuclear devices unavailable in citrus packages, so the bomb enlarged, as did the plot, which was to feature Libya's Muammar Qaddafi as the baddie. Charlie got a book going (Larry Collins and Dominique LaPierre's best-seller, *The Fifth Horseman*) and had executives flying in for meetings at Saint-Tropez. No movie, however. The killer, the story went, was real bombs—which the Libyans said they'd put in Paramount theaters.

Charlie had to settle for an American terrorist thriller about an explosives-packed Goodyear crashing into the Super Bowl. To promote *Black Sunday,* Charlie wanted a huge, revolving model of a blimp stuck atop the Gulf & Western building. That went aglimmering only when a marketing executive pointed out that Charlie's Fifth Avenue neighbors might withdraw tea invitations were park views to be disturbed. He did get his way when Dino De Laurentiis was producing the film version of James Grady's novel *Six Days of the Condor,* starring Robert Redford and Faye Dunaway. Correctly guessing big box office with one teensie change, Charlie said, "No longer six days, three days, O.K. Dino?"

Though fewer than circa Jaffe-Yablans, there were also eruptions—one of the worst after Charlie, sucker sentimentalist without peer, watched Richard Gere and Debra Winger in the throat choker *An Officer and a Gentleman.* Diller initially couldn't understand his upset, so violent were the sputtering syllables. Finally, he put it together: "I had not told him that we had made this good movie. It took him days to get over it."

Warren Beatty, who'd kissed and made up by bringing Paramount *The Parallax View* and *Heaven Can Wait,* got another side of Charlie when he pushed him *Reds,* an *hommage* to journalist John Reed's adventures during the Bolshevism's good old days. "A picture about a Communist who dies?" said Charlie. "What's it going to cost?" Maybe $30 million, Warren said. "Do me a favor," said Charlie. "Go to Mexico, spend $1 million, keep $29 million for yourself. Please, don't make this picture." But that's not what happened. With Charlie's bucks and Barry's backing, Warren made the movie and won the Academy Award for best director. "I want to name ... Charles Bluhdorn, who owns Gulf & Western and God knows what else," he said in accepting, "no matter how much we might have liked to strangle each other from time to time."

"He would spend three hours on the telephone, pitching ideas, each idea nuttier and nuttier than the last."



Bluhdorn (née Le Marrec), vacationing in Hong Kong in the late 70s.

But clouds were shadowing Oscar night, a whole black bank of them in the form of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The skies' darkening traced to 1974, when Gulf & Western's general counsel, Joel Dolkhart, was accused of embezzling $2.5 million from the white-shoe law firm Simpson, Thacher & Bartlett, where he also was a senior partner. Charlie was apoplectic. Dolkhart had been with him from virtually the beginning, so trusted he'd made him executor of his estate. He knew everything—potential nitroglycerin, were Dolkhart to trade his scalp for Bluhdorn's. But Charlie insisted on joining the criminal complaint. "Is this America?" he demanded. "Am I supposed to stand by for the felonies of a thief? Since when is this a country where the victim gets punished and not the villain?"

Sure enough, just before sentencing in October 1975, Dolkhart started singing first to the Manhattan D.A., then to Stanley Sporkin, the headline-hunting enforcement chief of the Securities and Exchange Commission. As the S.E.C. drained Dolkhart of old tunes, reporter Jeff Gerth, who just happened to have attended the Bar Mitzvah of Sporkin's son—began working with Seymour Hersh, uncoverer of the My Lai massacre, and investigative Attila for *The New York Times.* The result was a three-part 12,000-word evisceration of Charlie that began running on the front page in late June 1977. Hersh hung out laundry by the bushel: Sindona and *Darling Lili;* late-night meetings chief with tax records; fantastic sugar trading; accounting arabesques to shame the Bolshoi. But there was scarcely that wasn't big-business standard operating, and—except for Charlie, who was convinced the F.B.I. was following him—most yawned.

Sporkin, nonetheless, pressed on, swatting Charlie with a 60-page complaint that accused him of violating most everything in the statute book. Charlie answered by hiring prominent in-a-jam attorney Edward Bennett Williams, who declared, "Charlie's a force of nature. He makes corporations the way volcanoes make islands. There's got to be room in this world for unconventional people."

Posturing complete, Eddie and Stanley started talking deal—like on the order of whether pitcher Jim Palmer might go for outfielder Jim Rice. "Sporkin loved sports and Ed owned the Orioles at the time," explains a Paramount lawyer. "The meeting would start and Stanley would ask how


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something about the Orioles. For the next 10 minutes, they'd be talking sports. Then they'd get to the proceeding, and . . . Ed would look at his watch and say, 'Jeez, Stanley, I've got another meeting. I allocated an hour to this. Let's reschedule.' Stanley would say, 'Fine,' and the same thing would happen the next time."

And so, month after month, it went, just as Williams intended. Knowing how memories dimmed and ardor flagged, he wanted, says his biographer Evan Thomas in *The Man to See,* the case to "age."

After two years' ripening, the S.E.C. was ready to let Charlie off with a wrist-slap consent decree. Williams, who'd had his fill of his client's two-hour phone calls (once, Williams left the receiver on the desk, stretched out on the floor, and pretended to take a nap—without Bluhdorn noticing), urged him to grab it, and amid squawks, Charlie took the settlement to his board. But as he laid out the terms, Charlie's face started to crimson, and he began comparing what was before them to another Munich, foisted by the tyrannical, un-American S.E.C. If they didn't have guts enough to fight, said Charlie, he'd throw principle in the ash can, but only for the company's sake. To a man, Gulf & Western's directors rose up and volunteered to join their leader in the dock.

No one did any time. Having met its match and then some, in 1981 the Securities and Exchange Commission concluded five years of investigating by dropping all charges against Charles G. Bluhdorn.

But Charlie did not have long to relish; by then he was dying of leukemia.

"Charlie's a force of nature," said attorney Edward Bennett Williams. "He makes corporations the way volcanoes make islands."

He hid his illness from nearly everyone, fearing it would be blood for the sharks already sniffing his undervalued stock. When he could no longer put off treatment, he said that he was going for a gall-bladder operation. On his return, the only difference Diller could detect was a switch in hairstyle: what had once been thin and pulled straight back was thicker and combed to the side. Seeing Barry studying what was, in fact, a wig, Charlie said, "I just decided to change."

As time went on, Diller noticed other shifts: now and again Charlie would doze off during meetings, and, more and more, he was spending time in his beloved Dominican.

Sugar had brought Charlie to where Columbus first stepped foot, and his speculations on sugar's price had brought Gulf & Western and the Dominican scores of millions. But something else had happened, too: Charlie had fallen in love with the place.

The signs of the affair were all around: the medical clinics, houses, libraries, churches, and schools he built for his 37,000 workers; the salaries he paid (25 percent higher than other growers); the tourist industry he financed; the free-trade zone he established; the natives he lifted to executive posts; the smile that exploded his face whenever he was at Casa de Campo, the hovel he'd made a world-class resort.

It had hotels and sparkling beaches; a golf course, "Teeth of the Dog," rated the finest resort layout in the world; an airstrip where Oscar de la Renta, Dino De Laurentiis, and the other rich Charlie had persuaded to build mansions could land their jets. And in the center, ringed by a barbed-wire-topped fence, and patrolled by machine-gun-toting guards, Charlie's compound: a house for himself (La Favorita) and another, larger one (Casa Grande) for Gulf & Western executives, such as Simon & Schuster chairman Dick Snyder, who announced to the pistoleros, "We're here to assassinate Charles Bluhdorn"—and was smilingly waved on through.

But Charlie's pride was a native artists' colony and craft school he was erecting on a towering cliff top overlooking a bend in the Chavón River. He'd spotted the site one day in 1976 while helicoptering over his domain. Awed by the raw, wild beauty, Charlie ordered the chopper to set down, clambered out, and put his foot atop a large boulder, as if Chris C. himself. "I'm going to build something here like nobody's ever seen in the Caribbean," he said, and named it right then: "Los Altos"—Spanish for "the heights."

Five years and $30 million later, what looked to be a 16th-century Riviera hill town had arisen from the jungle—except not even St. Paul de Vence had a plaza floored in mosaics of sun-bleached coral and black river stones, a fountain fed by gurgling lions, and a cut-down cathedral named for Saint Stanislaus, patron of Poland. Never one to scrimp, Charlie also threw in an amphitheater in the Roman style, seating 5,000.

He was a frequent visitor during buil ing, ordering architects as he did stud execs. But as the project finished, his bo began to shrivel. Nonetheless, Charlie ke making the trip, and in mid-Februa 1983, against doctors' advice, he ca again. He arrived Thursday, the 16t Yvette with him on the Gulfstream. Thr days later, he was dead. There was nothi sudden or lurid; he simply slipped away.

Gulf & Western's board put unroman Marty Davis in charge, and the dismantli began almost at once: the stock portfol the parts-makers, the cigar, paper, hosie underwear, and mattress companies, t Dominican jewels—everything that did entertain. Connections to Charlie were al erased, including his office, which, Da had promised Yvette, would be maintain as a shrine: Marty was working in it no Fed up, Diller left in the fall of 1984 to ta over Fox. His departure set off others: E ner to resuscitate Disney, Katzenberg in F wake. Before long, 30 other Paramount e ecutives would join them—half the studi senior creative team.

In 1994, after Viacom bested Diller a takeover bid for what was now bei called Paramount Communications, Da himself was gone; he died of a heart a tack five years later. The Gulf & Weste building had become someone else's mon ment by then: Donald Trump, who fix the swaying and rebuilt it as a Philip Joh son–designed condo.

Today, the only trace of Charles Blu dorn is Altos de Chavón, which, und the direction of a daughter so much li him, trains artists and artisans whose wo is displayed around the world. It's be years since Barry Diller has visited, but remembers the night they christened Cha lie's amphitheater. Among other things, was the last time he saw him.

Frank Sinatra had been brought in, pa $1 million to deliver the "Concert for t Americas," which, many say, was Fran best. Yvette picked a number of the son "I've Got the World on a String," "Ne York, New York," "Searching," "All or No ing at All," "The Best Is Yet to Come." A one could have described her husband's lif

An hour before the event, Diller, still n knowing how truly sick Charlie was, went Casa Grande to fetch him. Charlie tried beg off, claiming he wasn't properly dresse But Barry forced him out to a waiting he copter. With a whine of turbines, the cr jerked off and headed through the darkne down the river and up the cliff face. swooped over the top, then hovered abo the brilliantly lit bowl, roaring with huma ity. Gazing down on the insane, magic marvel he had made, Charlie Bluhdorn b gan to weep. □



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VANITIES



Katharine Towne

OCCUPATION: Actor. **AGE:** 22. **PROVENANCE:** Los Angeles. **PERSONAL BEST:** Towne starred in director Don Roos's short-lived NBC comedy *M.Y.O.B.* and played Michelle Pfeiffer and Harrison Ford's daughter in *What Lies Beneath.* **WHAT LIES AHEAD?** This summer, Towne takes on celluloid comedy in Ivan Reitman's *Evolution*—"kind of a *Ghostbusters* with aliens"—and stars in the indie *Sol Goode,* but first she can be seen in the long-awaited, much-delayed *Town & Country,* with Warren Beatty and Goldie Hawn. "I look so different in that film. That was, like, the third film I ever did. It was a long time ago." **THE QUESTION SHE DREADS THE MOST:** "'Oh, is your father . . .?' I'm like, 'Yeah, next question.'" Her father is *Chinatown* screenwriter Robert Towne. "He didn't want me to be an actor. I really had to prove myself, and it wasn't like he got me an agent. I had to go and scrounge." **THE LAST DETAIL:** "I'm always at home reading scripts, worrying about my next job and wanting to work with really cool people and wanting to make cool things happen."

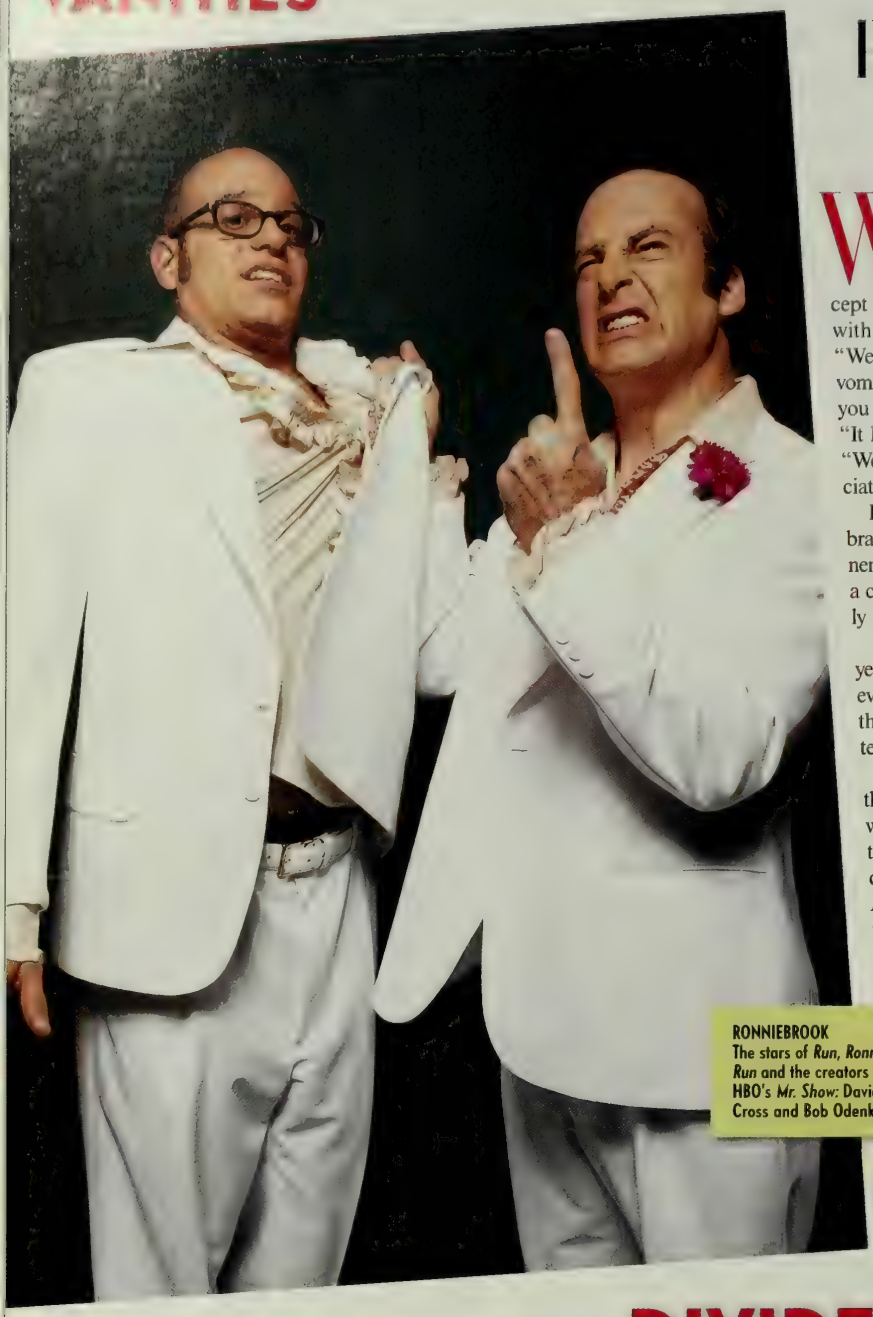
—KRISTA SMITH

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RONNIEBROOK
The stars of *Run, Ronnie, Run* and the creators of HBO's *Mr. Show:* David Cross and Bob Odenkirk.

Play *Mr.* for Me

HBO's *Mr. Show* goes big-screen

With an eye toward innovative subversion **David Cross** and **Bob Odenkirk,** the duo behind HBO's fabled series *Mr. Show with Bob and David,* are taking the concept of product placement to satirical new heights with their feature-film debut, *Run, Ronnie, Run.* "We have a scene in a Wendy's where we're just vomiting. We have this long conversation about why you would make square burgers," says Odenkirk. "It has nothing to do with the plot." Adds Cross: "We were paid by a few companies not to be associated with the movie in any way."

Fans of the twosome will recognize this tangential brand of humor as trademark fare from the partners' ambitiously absurd sketch-comedy program—a cult hit which aired from 1995 to 1999 and finally gave the colonials an answer to *Monty Python.*

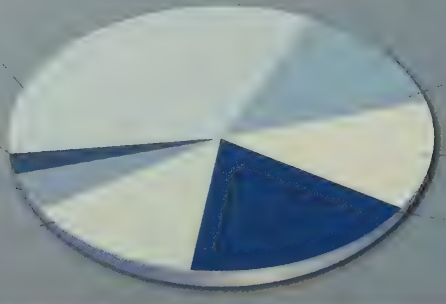
"It was a lot of fun," says Cross, "but after four years it became not worth it anymore. We'd spend every day in a windowless, airless room, only to then be relegated to Mondays at midnight." Bitter? Party of one? Your table is ready, sir.

Actually, Cross's tone suggests burnout more than lingering resentment. Consider that both men worked on **Ben Stiller's** underrated Fox series in the early 90s prior to launching their own showcase on cable television. Besides, if nothing else, *Mr. Show* proved a crucible for the central characters in *Run, Ronnie, Run,* including the film's namesake, Ronnie Dobbs—the most arrested man on a reality-based law-enforcement show called *Fuzz.*

New Line Cinema plans to release the comedy sometime in the coming year, but Odenkirk is already keeping his expectations in pre-emptive check when it comes to fringe critiques of the on-screen chicanery. "I can't wait to get those reviews from, like, *Movie Time Nightly:* 'I couldn't stop laughing! I'd never seen a movie before, and these images really seemed to move across the screen.'" —BILL POWER

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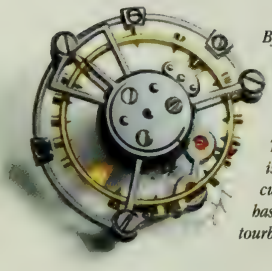
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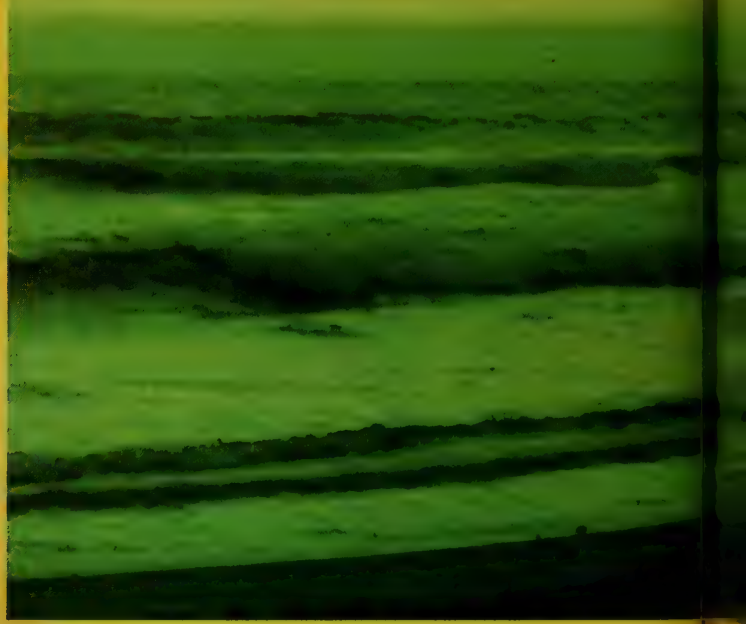
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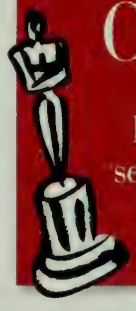


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Mad About the Cinema!

Nan Darien sells herself in Hollywood



Shortly after I arrived in Los Angeles, my agent's assistant called me to ask if my room at the Bel Air "cozy" enough; I told him, "Darling, it's ond cozy—it's absolutely uterine."

'd gone out to Hollywood to try to sell my story: such fun! You know, I've had such interesting life, being a girl of Park Ave lo these many years, and so many, ny of the things I've done would make nderful movies. Like the summer I ran an cream parlor on Martha's Vineyard with **Graham:** it was a hoot; one customer ne in and asked for "poisonberry"—he ant "boysenberry," but he said "poisonberry." It was an abute movie, I tell you, an absolute movie! **George Clooney** and **e Blanket** to star! Soundtrack by **Celine Dijon**!

My friend **Binky Urban,** an ICM agent, owed me a favor, so set me up with **Jeremy Zimmer,** an agent in L.A. I met Jer his office on my first day. Jer's reaction to my story ideas was newhat tepid, but he did say that I was "good in a room," ich is agentspeak for "Client can form whole sentences." I told "Well, of course I'm good in a room, darling—I'm wearing ,000 worth of Prada! I'm Wonderbra'd up to my fullest exten-!" He said that when pitching an idea to someone always say, s [one film title] meets [another film title]." I knew exactly what meant: if your pitch is part *Two for the Road* and part *Of Human ndage,* then you call the movie *Two for the Of.*

The first place Jer sent me was **Bette Midler's** company, All Girl oductions. I pitched the poisonberry ice-cream story. "That's not tory, that's a line of dialogue," **Bonnie Bruckheimer,** a producer, l me. I said, "Well, the customer could ask for other flavors, too. milla.' Or 'butter precan.' It could be absolutely hysterical! George Clooney and Cate Blankless to star! Soundtrack by Sarong Dijon!" Bonnie shifted in her seat and said my skills might be better suited for *The Saturday Night Live.*

Next, at **Joel Silver's** office, I pitched him a movie about the time I threw a dinner party at Lutèce but everyone showed up at La Caravelle instead. Joel seemed interested, but wondered if it could be done on motorcycles, with **Gina Gershon** to star. "Gina as me? Or Gina as **Pat Buckley**?," I asked. "Gina as you, the Buckleys, *and* the waiter—just like Eddie in *The Nutty Professor,*" he said. This made me *very* nervous.

Next I told a gal at **Art Linson's** office about the year I spent opening the mail at *Vogue*—some of the letters were absolutely fascinating, total movie material—and she asked when this took place. I explained, "Right after I got out of Vassar," whereupon she said, "Oh, it's a period picture." Period picture?!! That imbecile. She probably thinks *Malcolm X* was a sequel.

So: no bites yet. However, during my stay, three different ICM agents invited me to that most vaunted, most exclusive L.A. social event—a *Bris.* Now, why anyone would invite you (and their "top five TV clients") to stand in his living room to watch his son's ritual circumcision is beyond me. And then they all eat copiously! No, something about the removal of a little boy's flapdoodle prohibits me from partaking in these events' onslaught of catering; somehow I can't quite jump on the bandwagon of "Flapdoodle is removed . . . And now, calamari!"

So, I left Hollywood without a production deal. I am not "in turnaround"; I don't have a housekeeping deal; I'm neither pay nor play; no one in my employ has put together a deal for me that is "very creative." But if you want to know about foreskin, darling, call me.



GEORGE WAYNE Q&A

Bud Cort is not just "Harold" anymore

His famous role as the suicide-obsessed Harold opposite Ruth Gordon's Maude in *Harold and Maude* indicated the arrival of a bracing new talent, but typecasting, along with his own tendency to turn down parts, caused Bud Cort to fall off the public's radar screen. With recent roles in Ed Harris's *Pollock* and Wim Wenders' *The Million Dollar Hotel,* Cort is back, and ready to reveal details about his remarkable Hollywood journey.

George Wayne: *In 1971 you starred in what cineasts consider a masterpiece of moviemaking,* Harold and Maude. *You've called the film's success a blessing and a curse. Why?*

Bud Cort: Because it's all anybody wants to talk about. I've made so many films and done so much theater since, and it's just one of those parts that's so identifiable that it's hard to lose that identity no matter what I do.

G.W. *Why does it continue to resonate?*

B.C. There are so many important life issues addressed in it. The right to love, the right to choose whom to love. There is the whole teen-angst thing.

G.W. *You say that you and Ruth Gordon almost became the relationship you both portrayed in* Harold and Maude.

B.C. During the making of the film, she was very standoffish. Then, the day my father died, the first call I got was from Ruth, saying, "Let me tell you about the day my father died." And suddenly we became the characters pretty much that we were in the film. We really became friends the night my father died. Oddly enough, he died waiting for me to show up on *This Is Your Life,* Ruth Gordon.

G.W. *Are there days when you feel like a washed-up Hollywood has-been?*

B.C. Sweetheart, I've never been busier in my life. You know how many films I have coming out?

G.W. *Anyone who hasn't seen you in a movie since* Harold and Maude *would be hard-pressed to recognize you in one of your latest films,* The Million Dollar Hotel. *Did you have to pay Wim Wenders to put you in this film?*

B.C. Did I have to *pay* him? Wim is a genius and I wanted to work with Wim. He called my agent and told him he wanted me to be in that. I'm really trying not to turn down that much these days. For example, *Pollock*—I've always admired Ed Harris, and he showed me a portrait of that character and I looked exactly like him, but only if I would put on 100 pounds, which I proceeded to do.

G.W. *How did you end up living with Groucho Marx?*

B.C. One day, through our mutual friend, Erin Fleming, I got invited to a party at Groucho's. I took a cab up there, and the second my fist connected with the door, there stood Groucho in a beret. Simultaneously we both gasped, and he slammed the door in my face. When the door opened again, Groucho said, "I'm sorry, I thought you were Charles Manson." [It was just after the murders.] Then it turned out we had the same psychiatrist, and he started dropping these ideas that I should live with Groucho.

G.W. *Was Groucho in love with you?*

B.C. I used to say he was my fairy godfather. He did love me, and I loved him. I'd sit on his bed in pajamas and watch his old films with him. It was like getting a Fulbright education in comedy.

G.W. *There is a famous anecdote about Bud Cort and Groucho's tooth.*

B.C. That's an amazing story. I had done a film, and Groucho decided he was going to arrange a press premiere for me. That day he had a stroke. I was just beside myself. I went back to the house and Erin came out of his bedroom, and we threw our arms around each other and just sobbed. She said, "Groucho's got a present for you." I closed my eyes and opened my hand, and I was holding a tooth. His tooth fell out that afternoon, and he said, "Let's give this to Bud for good luck for opening night." I started roaring with laughter, and in the middle of it just started sobbing. She gave me a swig of vodka, a Valium. I took it. I opened my hand to look at the tooth, but was holding the Valium.

G.W. *What advice do you give to actors who gain fame at a young age?*

B.C. I would say that if you're typecast, just do it. Don't turn anything down.

G.W. *Thank you, Bud Cort.*

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RIGHT SAID TED
Blow director Ted Demme, photographed in his office at Spanky Pictures in West Hollywood on February 3, 2001. *Inset*, one of Demme's favorite restaurants, the eternally cool Dan Tana's, is just a push button away.

SPEED DIAL TED DEMME

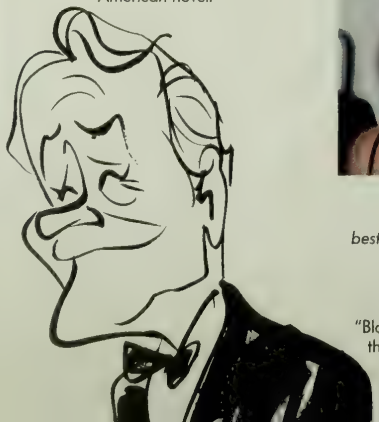
A good last name can open a lot of doors in Hollywood. It can also close them just as quickly if you don't live up to the promise of that name. Flying quietly under nepotism's radar for the better part of a decade, director **Ted Demme**—the only nephew of Academy Award–winning director **Jonathan Demme**—has forged a career worthy of any name. Demme, 37, got his start as the creator of *Yo! MTV Raps* in the late 80s, and from there moved on to films—*Beautiful Girls, The Ref,* and *Life,* to name a few. In his office at Spanky Pictures in West Hollywood, Demme has a Rolodex loaded with Hollywood's reigning hip class, and he has the speed dial to prove it. Lately, most-often-dialed status has been reserved for some of the key players involved in his upcoming drug-smuggling epic, *Blow,* including **Michael De Luca** (No. 8), the recently deposed president of New Line Cinema and the film's executive producer. De Luca is "also my therapist," says Demme. No. 5 is **Nick Cassavetes,** an actor, director, and screenwriter and the son of **John Cassavetes** and **Gena Rowlands.** Nick Cassavetes adapted the screenplay for *Blow* with **David McKenna** from the book of the same name. **Paul Reubens** (No. 6)—still **Pee-wee Herman** to some—is in there, and will probably be in many more directors' speed dials once they take in his scene-stealing performance as a flamboyant beautician turned drug dealer (opposite the film's star, **Johnny Depp**). Director **Paul Thomas Anderson** (No. 10), "my spiritual adviser," and Afghan Whigs frontman **Greg Dulli** (No. 15) add to the young-Hollywood-rogue factor. Some of L.A.'s culinary landmarks are listed, too: restaurants **Dan Tana's** (No. 12) and **Jerry's Famous Deli** (No. 3). Higher up on the speed dial, though—and perhaps most important—are Demme's wife, Amanda (No. 1), a music supervisor on films, and their nanny, Rosa (No. 2): the former "for everything" and the latter to check in on their daughter. And finally—and we all have bad days—there's bail bondsman **Josh Herman** (No. 9). "Just in case," explains a cautious Demme. —DANA BROWN

NIGHT TABLE READING

Hollywood's most exclusive club: multiple-Oscar winners

JACK LEMMON
two-time Oscar winner: best supporting actor, Mister Roberts *(1955); best actor,* Save the Tiger *(1973)*

At Play in the Fields of the Lord, by Peter Matthiessen (Vintage). "I'm reading it again. It's my favorite American novel."





SALLY FIELD
two-time Oscar winner: best actress, Norma Rae *(1979) and* Places in the Heart *(1984)*

How to Read and Why, by Harold Bloom (Scribner). "Bloom is a brilliant writer. Reading this book is like taking a class in comparative literature."

BILLY WILDER
six-time Oscar winner: best director, The Lost Weekend *(1945) and* The Apartment *(1960); picture,* The Apartment; *original screenplay,* Sunset Boulevard *(1950) and* The Apartment; *adapted screenplay,* The Lost Weekend

Conversations with Wilder, by Cameron Crowe (Knopf). "This is one of the best books I've ever read."



with NIKE AIR technology



COLE HAAN

VANITIES

War and Remembrance

Contributing editor Edwin John Coaster's adventures in the screen trade



ILLUSTRATION BY TIM SHEAFFER

EDWIN COASTER

2/16/01

Dear Graydon:

Stock the bar with Blanton's, amigo! I'll be in L.A. just in time for your Oscars party! Tom Hanks is flying me out to be a consultant on Of Noble Vision, his latest paean to us war vets—it's a filmed oral history on "the precocious poise of the American soldier in the 20th century" or some such. To tell you the truth, I don't know what the hell it is, he's just paying me a truckload of money to utter some pieties about my mud-streaked brethren and not acknowledge that we all spent as much time fighting the clap as we did the North Koreans. Anyway, last time I was invited to your Hollywood party, you made me come at 12:45 A.M., by which time the action was dying down and the only celebs left were Ernie and Tova Borgnine. Can't you get me into the dinner this time? Perhaps seated next to Lara Flynn Boyle? (I understand that I'm her type, bodywise.)

Also, as per our new agreement, I am turning in copy every day to prove that I am indeed working on my Longest Day memoir for the Hollywood issue. Here's what I finished last night—sorry about the abrupt ending. The muse wasn't cooperating, and there was a thing about Midway on the History Channel ...

Best,

Ed

Ed

WHATEVER YOU SAY, MR. ZANUCK, OR: MY LIFE AS AN UNCREDITED WRITER FOR THE LONGEST DAY
By Edwin John Coaster

Phone ringing. The grooves of my desk at the Her Tribune are imprinted on my face—must've passed o in the wee ayem after a hard night of Breslining up and down the East Side. Ringing, ringing—aah, the hell with it. "Hullo?" Lady says it's a call from Paris ... a Mr. Zanuck ... "Ed, m'boy, read your book, think you're just the man to do a polish on the war picture I'm making. It's called The Longest Day. My driver will collect you presently and take you to Idlewild ... I presume you have a passport ... "

Cut to the Hotel Ritz—a honey-haired broad of indiscriminate accent lounges drowsily on an imperial-size bed. I'm trying to keep one eye trained on her and the other on the mustachioed little duffer with the "DFZ"-monogram robe and the space between his teeth. "Yes, I can tell you're just the man, Coaster ... " Damn! He's caught me looking at Miss Negligee's cleavage. "I see you're quite taken with Marta," he says. The waffleboard pattern of his robe suddenly takes on a curious parabolic cast at thigh level. "Go on, then, you two begin. I'll be back in a minute with my riding crop." Slowly, I lower the portable Underwood I've been clutching since I got off the plane, and start to

EDWIN COASTER

2/17/01

Dear Graydon:

Sorry to hear that the Longest Day memoir has been killed. Curious as to why. Anyway, you can't say I didn't do my part. As for how this counts against my contract, it would have been, had I kept writing it, a 20,000-word piece. But I'll be fair and say, let's count it for 15,000 words, O.K.? As for H'wood party, what do you mean there's no space left? Couldn't Dominick stay home this year? Or I could share Fran's seat—she's little! I'll leave it to your planners. Tell them I'm at the Beverly Hills Hotel, the bungalows. Also, thinking ahead—my contract expires shortly. Shall we have re-up lunch at Patroon after Oscar madness? Call me.

Best,

Ed

Ed



THE EYE OF A COLLECTOR

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and 9, 2001
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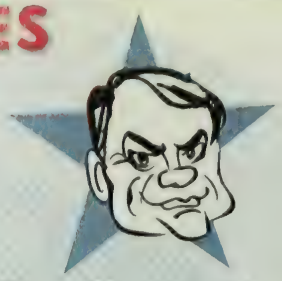
OGUES
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n paper, 15 by 18¼ in. 38.2 by 46 cm.
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raph of Joan Miró by Man Ray,
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OTHEBY'S
Founded 1744





The Rex Reed Guide to Actresses Throughout History

BY HENRY ALFORD



★ Minnie Driver ★

"HOW MANY CLOWNS CAN YOU FIT INTO ONE SMALL CAR? ASK *THIS* FUNNY LADY—SHE'S IN THE MINI DRIVER'S SEAT!"

★ Cameron Diaz ★



"SHE'S DIAZ-ZLING! LIGHTS, CAMERON, ACTION!"



★ Tori Spelling ★

"F-A-B-U-L-O-U-S. THAT'S HOW I SPELL IT!"

★ Janeane Garofalo ★



"BIG LAFFS + BIG BOX OFFICE = GAROFABOFFOLO!"



★ Tovah Feldshuh ★

"THIS LITTLE SPITFIRE WILL LAUNCH AN AIR RAID ON YOUR HEARTSTRINGS—TOVAH! TOVAH! TOVAH!"

★ Swoosie Kurtz ★



"MY HEART IS HAMMERING AND MY HEAD IS LIGHT— I'M STARTING TO FEEL ALL SWOOSIE!"



★ Meryl Streep ★

"THE MOST EXCITING WORD IN SHOW BIZ IS 'STREEP,' AND WHEN I SAY 'STREEP,' I AM NOT A FRENCHMAN ASKING YOU TO UNDRESS!"

★ Barbra Streisand ★



"CALL HER THE BEST SINGER-ACTRESS-DIRECTOR EVER, OR CALL ME MENTL!"



★ Elaine May ★

"ELAINE MAY? ELAINE HAS, AND ELAINE WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO!"

★ Uta Hagen ★



"LIKE THE BEST ICE CREAM YOU EVER TASTED, THIS HAGEN-DAZS IT VERY NICELY INDEED!"

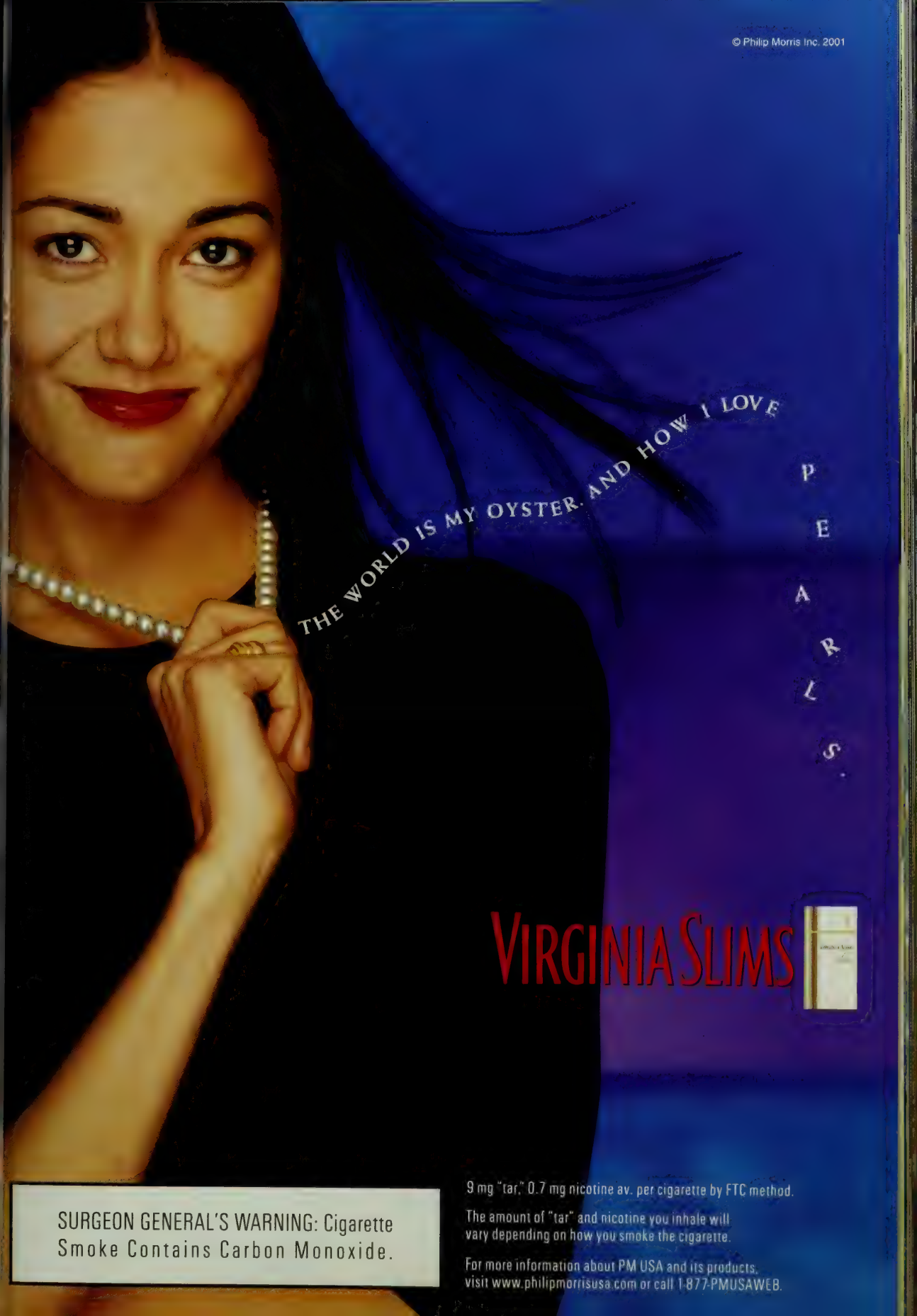


★ Nell Gwynn ★

"RECKON THIS CLASSY LADY GWYNN PROVE ONCE AND FER ALL THAT HOLLYWOOD AIN'T NO NICKEL-AND-DIME BUM SHOW!"



OUT		IN
High school	MOVIE GENRE	Sport and [illegible]
Cigar guy	MOVIE TOUGH GUY	Chick
Kabbalah	CULT	Est
"Big who cares"	B-GIRL NOTE	"Can we *Matrix* this up?"
Australian	HOT ETHNICITY	Asian
Actors	DIRECTORS	Brothers
Writing a script	BREAKING IN	Shooting on digital
Vagina Monologues	WOMEN'S MOVEMENT	Knitting clubs
Agent	PLAYER	Production designer
Yoga	STRESS REDUCER	Pottery
Jackie's Babies First Class	POWER TODDLERS	Xan Cassavetes playgroup
NYPD Blue	COMEBACK VEHICLE	*Ally McBeal*
DVD	TV GADGET	TiVo
Girl power	INDIE GENRE	*Noir*
Shiny	SKIN TONE	[illegible]
Dublin's Upstairs	YOUNG-HOLLYWOOD BAR	Beauty Bar
Korean BBQ	CUISINE	Cuban
Sequel acronym	MOVIE-TITLE TREND	Alliteration


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DKNY
MADISON & 60TH

VANITY FAIR presents its annual report on the ever changing film pantheon, a celestial checkup that hails the stars emerging, such as Benicio Del Toro and Laura Linney, and the stars re-emerging, such as Ellen Burstyn and (keep your fingers crossed) Robert Downey Jr.; the steady light of Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee, whose lives have indeed been an achievement, and the unknown comet of the kid who will be Harry Potter; the still-glowing cast of *Carnal Knowledge*, three decades on, and the blockbuster twinkle of Ron Howard and Brian Grazer, the men behind the year's biggest movie

THE HOLLYWOOD PORTFOLIO

PHOTOGRAPHS BY Annie Leibovitz, with Herb Ritts, Helmut Newton, David LaChapelle, Michael O'Neill, Firooz Zahedi, Julian Broad, Sam Jones, Mark Mawson, Art Streiber, Larry Fink, Jonas Karlsson, and Jason Schmidt



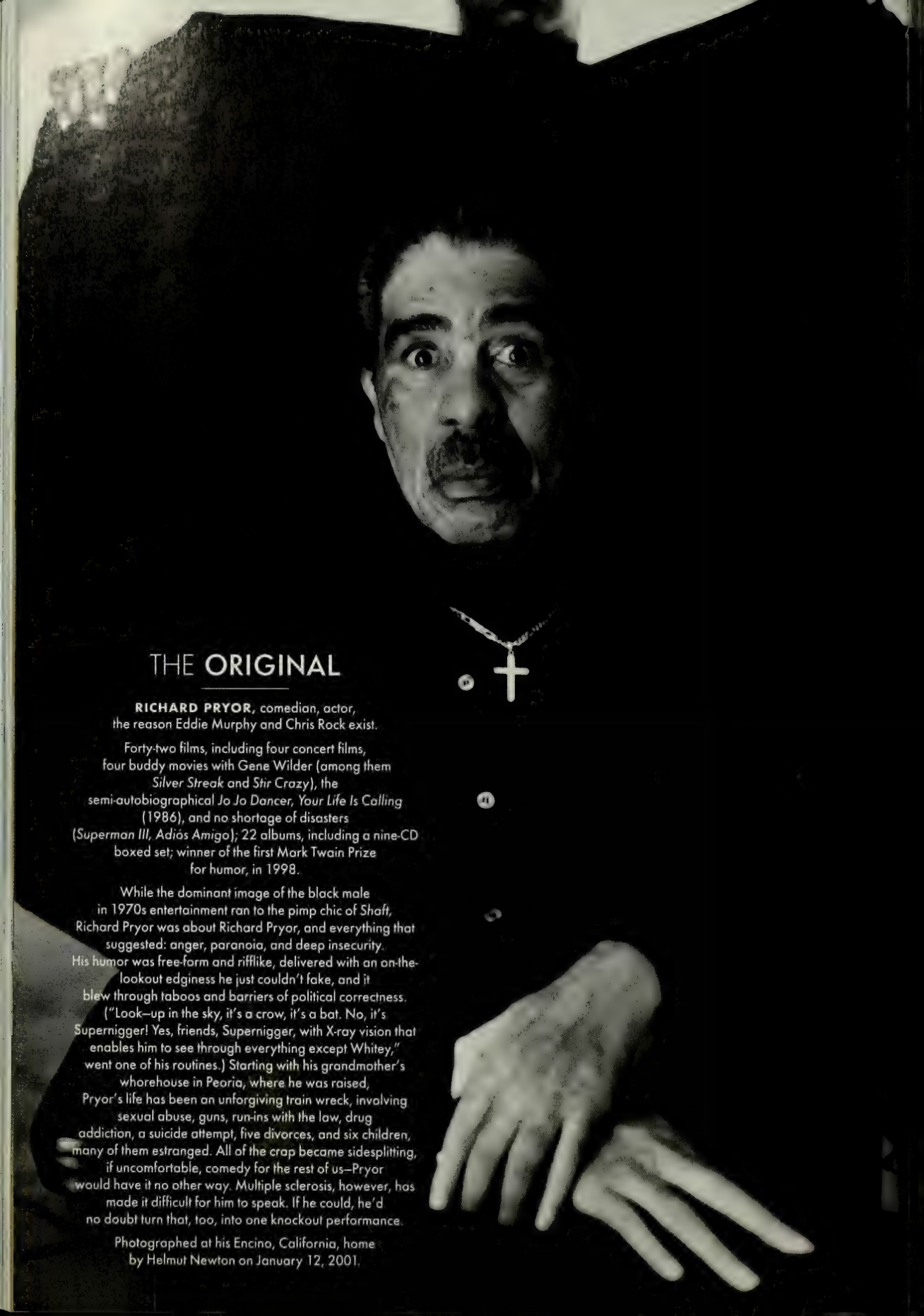
THE BROTHERHOOD

THE CULKIN BROTHERS,
actors

From left: Kit (11 years old, 3 films), Macaulay (20 years old, 13 films), and Kieran (18 years old, 12 films)

It's the year's most startling portrait. Culkin's all three of them. Eyes that are lavishly soulful, but reined in, top and bottom, by cool, appraising lids. Eyes simultaneously young and old, vulnerable and wised-up—a description that could also serve as [illegible] the Culkin brothers as the system Hollywood nepotist role. [illegible] Culkin's young reign as the Bad Seed of the ball-and-chat set. You surely know Macaulay. He hasn't fourth film since 1994's *Richie Rich*, but in *Home Alone* star has matured in unexpectedly graceful fashion, swanning through "those awkward years" (and a recent separation from his wife of 26 months) to make a well-reviewed debut late last year on the London stage. [illegible] Broadway to follow. His brother Kit, meanwhile, is drawing notice for his work as Laura Linney's quietly [illegible] son in last fall's *Can Count on Me*. Kieran has not yet had the fortune to either star in a $200-million-plus blockbuster or appear in a small but genuine masterpiece (his films to date, *The Mouse Rules* and *The Mighty*), but many [illegible] he's the best actor in the bunch.

Photographed by [illegible] Bromley, England, on November 28, 2000



THE ORIGINAL

RICHARD PRYOR, comedian, actor, the reason Eddie Murphy and Chris Rock exist.

Forty-two films, including four concert films, four buddy movies with Gene Wilder (among them *Silver Streak* and *Stir Crazy*), the semi-autobiographical *Jo Jo Dancer, Your Life Is Calling* (1986), and no shortage of disasters (*Superman III, Adiós Amigo*); 22 albums, including a nine-CD boxed set; winner of the first Mark Twain Prize for humor, in 1998.

While the dominant image of the black male in 1970s entertainment ran to the pimp chic of *Shaft*, Richard Pryor was about Richard Pryor, and everything that suggested: anger, paranoia, and deep insecurity. His humor was free-form and rifflike, delivered with an on-the-lookout edginess he just couldn't fake, and it blew through taboos and barriers of political correctness. ("Look—up in the sky, it's a crow, it's a bat. No, it's Supernigger! Yes, friends, Supernigger, with X-ray vision that enables him to see through everything except Whitey," went one of his routines.) Starting with his grandmother's whorehouse in Peoria, where he was raised, Pryor's life has been an unforgiving train wreck, involving sexual abuse, guns, run-ins with the law, drug addiction, a suicide attempt, five divorces, and six children, many of them estranged. All of the crap became sidesplitting, if uncomfortable, comedy for the rest of us—Pryor would have it no other way. Multiple sclerosis, however, has made it difficult for him to speak. If he could, he'd no doubt turn that, too, into one knockout performance.

Photographed at his Encino, California, home by Helmut Newton on January 12, 2001.



THE BOMBSHELL

RAQUEL WELCH,
actress, former San Diego weather girl.

Thirty-two films; nine TV movies; one Golden Globe; five beauty-pageant crowns, including 1958's Miss Fairest of the Fair.

"Raquel is raw, unconquerable, antediluvian woman. . . . She is the nubile savage crying out to be bashed on the skull and dragged to some lair by her wild auburn mane."
—*Time* cover story, 1969.

If you came of age in the late 1960s or early 1970s, the name Raquel Welch is synonymous with the phrase "sex symbol"—a curious locution, since there was nothing in the least symbolic about her charms (37-22-35, reported *Time*). If on occasion her acting could also seem statuesque, one must ask oneself: Could a Redgrave have done more with *One Million Years B.C.* (the 1966 film in which Welch found fame wearing a deconstructed fur bikini), *Fantastic Voyage* (1966), or the unfortunately titled *Mother, Jugs & Speed* (1976)? The Roller Derby epic *Kansas City Bomber* (1972) was her *Raging Bull*, but her greatest triumphs may have been her comic turns in *Bedazzled* (1967) and Richard Lester's *The Three Musketeers* (1974). More recently she has been producing much-admired yoga videos and lending her name to the Raquel Welch Signature Collection of quality wigs and hair extensions. Meanwhile, one looks at the Pamela Andersons of the world and waxes nostalgic. Believe it or not, youngsters, but sex symbols once had soul.

Photographed by Helmut Newton in her Rolls-Royce at her Beverly Hills home on January 30, 2001.





THE FLY BOYS

THE WAYANS BROTHERS

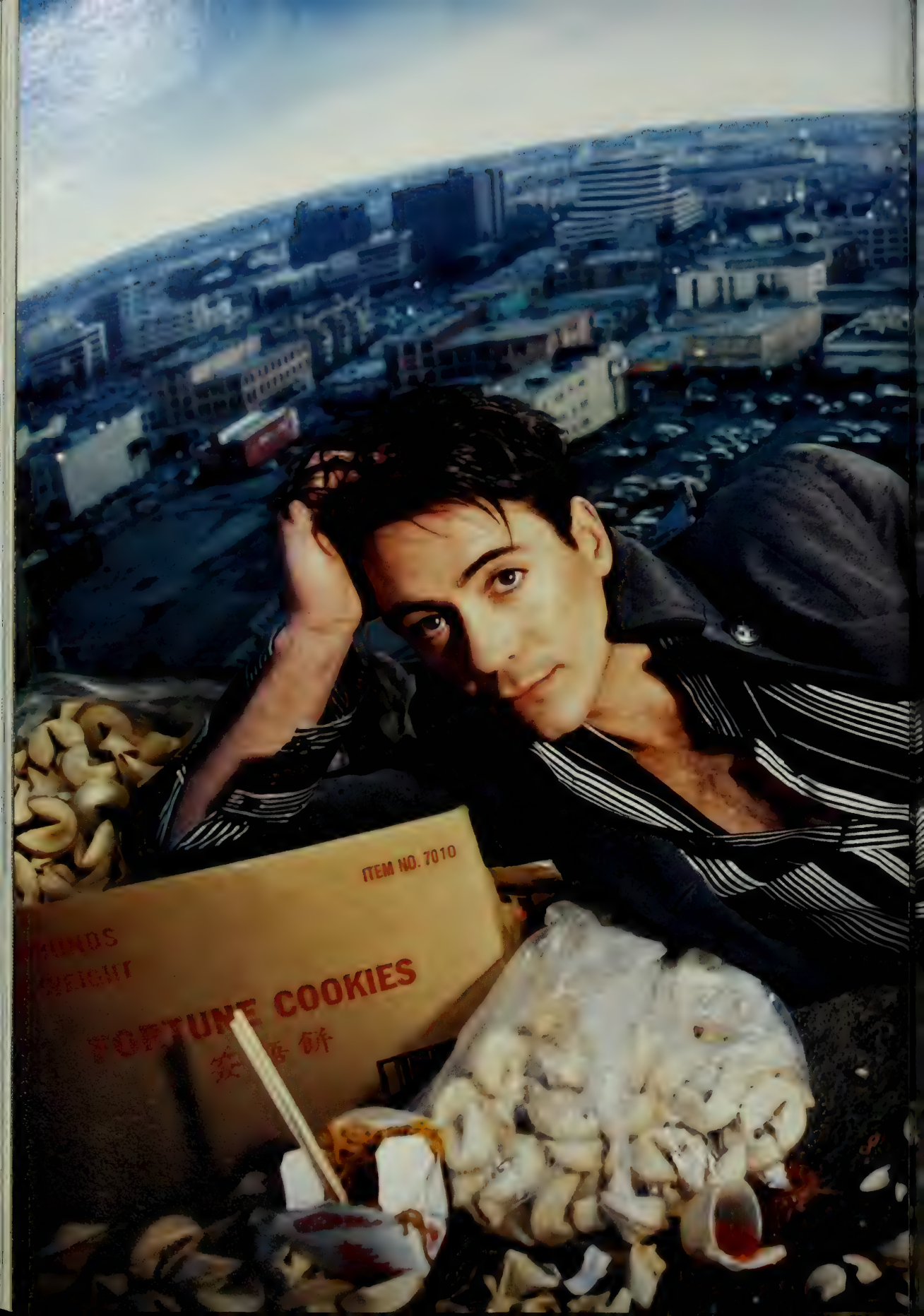
From left: Damon, Marlon, Shawn, and Keenen Ivory Wayans.

Thirty-nine films and four TV series, collectively; one record with *Scary Movie*, for highest-grossing film ever by a black director.

"The wrong brothers got paid for that. The Weinstein brothers got paid. The Wayans brothers are going to make our money on the sequel."
—Marlon Wayans, on the profits from *Scary Movie*.

It all started in 1990 with *In Living Color*, the high-voltage Fox TV variety show that became a kind of work-study program for Keenen Ivory Wayans's funny siblings. In addition to launching the careers of Jennifer Lopez and Jim Carrey, the series taught white guys in the Midwest to snap in circles and say "Homey, don't play dat" and the like. Things slowed down after Keenen left *In Living Color* in 1992, and by 1998 he and Damon seemed dangerously close to being washed up, while younger brothers Shawn and Marlon appeared destined to spend their lives chillin' in WB purgatory. But then came *Scary Movie*, written by Shawn and Marlon (who also starred) and directed by Keenen. Powered by nonstop toilet jokes and some of the best visual one-liners since *Airplane*, the slasher spoof flattened the competition and hauled in $277 million worldwide. Meanwhile, the family extroverts have been showing off their acting chops in dramatic roles: Damon played an embittered television writer in Spike Lee's *Bamboozled*, and Marlon impressed critics as a hard-luck junkie in Darren Aronofsky's drugsploitation flick, *Requiem for a Dream*. Washed up? As Homey the Clown would say, I don't think so.

Photographed by Herb Ritts on Denver Street at Universal Studios on January 16, 2001.


ITEM NO. 7010
FORTUNE COOKIES



THE PRODIGAL SON

one Oscar nomination

"Is this how you want to live your life?
Just damaging people around you, damaging yourself? You
commitment to really just shape your ass up, stop bullshitting ev
stop deceiving everyone and yourself too. You should promise me this right now.
Like, the real promise, the real deal. 'All right, I promise.' See, I can't even
fucking believe you. I can't believe *shit* that you say."
—Robert Downey Jr., babbling to himself in the mirror in *Two Girls and a Guy*.

His talent for obscuring the truth may account for some of his success as a drug addict. For better or worse, it's the same quality that's made him one of the most compelling actors around. In his more notable films—*Less than Zero* (1987), *Chaplin* (1992), *Short Cuts* (1993), *Two Girls and a Guy* (1997), and *Wonder Boys* (2000)—Downey has with great mastery inhabited *that guy*—the one who's always a step ahead, doing a mischievous little dance around what's really going on. All while exuding a puppy-dog warmth that says, *Please don't give up on me*. None of this has been lost on Hollywood. He continues to fall from sobriety (last November, four months after being released from a California prison, he was nabbed again for drug possession), and the town continues to give him second, third, even fourth chances, as evidenced by his recent, enormously winning performance on *Ally McBeal* (which earned him a Golden Globe). Scoffers may say he's playing all of us for fools. But according to Downey, "I'm not a movie star. I'm just a guy with a drug problem."

Photographed by David LaChapelle on the roof of the Continental Building in Los Angeles on January 26, 2001.



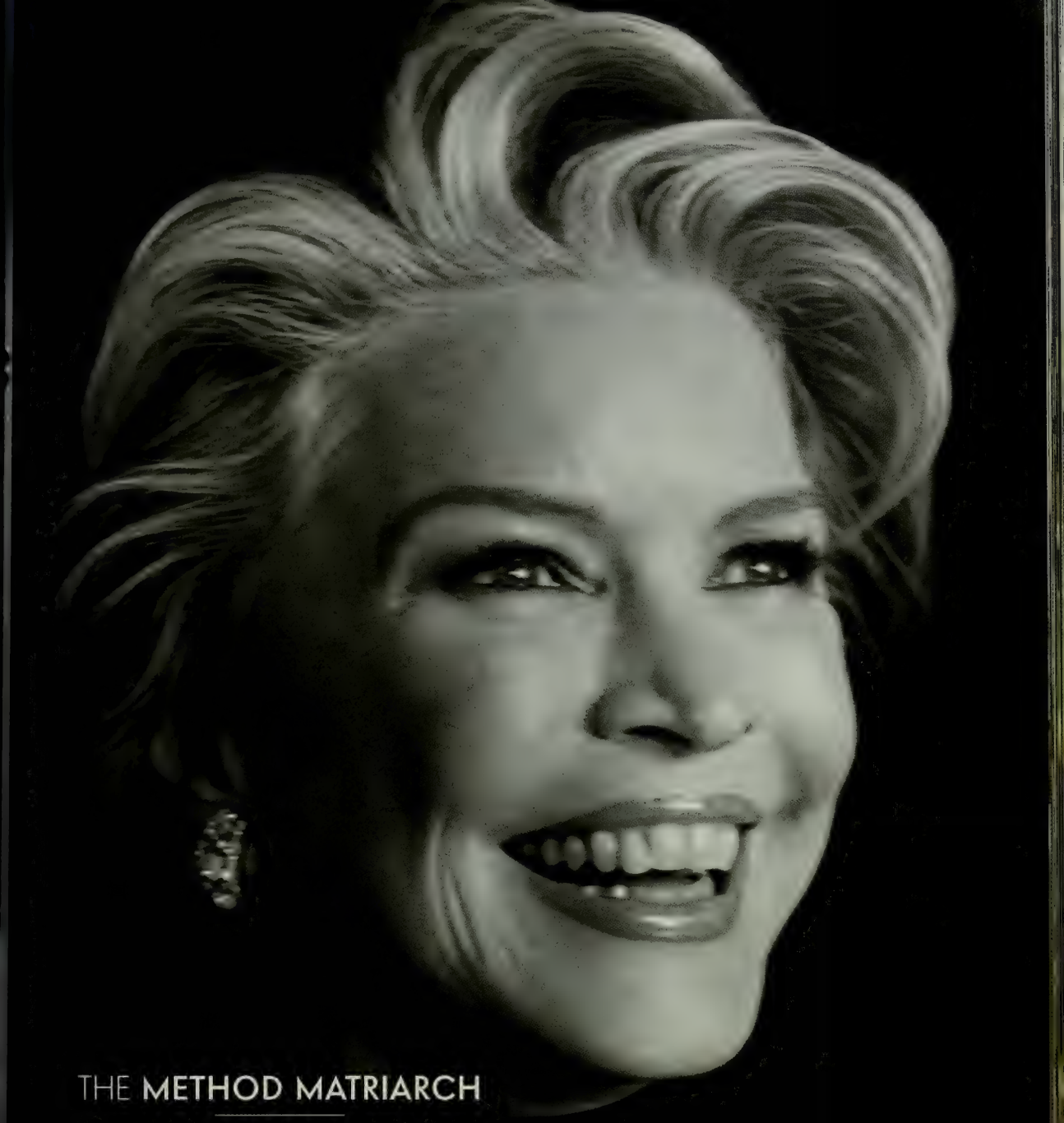
THE RIGHT STUFF

ED HARRIS,
actor, director.

Thirty-eight films; nine plays;
one best-actor Oscar nomination, for *Pollock* (2000);
two best-supporting-actor Oscar nominations,
for *Apollo 13* (1995) and *The Truman Show* (1998);
15 other film and theater awards;
one wife, fellow movie star Amy Madigan.

Though it may seem as though Ed Harris simply flipped through an encyclopedia looking for a historical figure he resembled, came across a headshot of Jackson Pollock, and decided to make a movie, in fact, Harris's father sent him a book about Pollock, thinking it might form the basis for a good film. Harris spent more than 10 years trying to get inside the mind of America's first art superstar. *Pollock*, his directorial debut, is that rare artist biopic which is neither pretentious nor tabloidized. Though he has appeared in more than three dozen films, Harris is a product of the theater. His tour de force performance in Sam Shepard's *Fool for Love* at San Francisco's Magic Theatre led to his 1983 breakout role as John Glenn in *The Right Stuff*. He has a stage actor's intensity, quiet but potentially explosive, which he has used to light up films as diverse as *Places in the Heart*, *State of Grace*, *Apollo 13*, and *The Truman Show*. So it can only be good news to cinephiles that those famous ice-blue eyes have begun to work their magic on both sides of the camera.

Photographed by Herb Ritts
at the North Highland Avenue Texaco station,
Los Angeles, on December 18, 2000.



THE METHOD MATRIARCH

ELLEN BURSTYN,
actress.

Thirty-nine films; four TV series; five Oscar nominations; one Oscar (for *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore*) and one Tony (for *Same Time, Next Year*), which she won in the same year—1975; one Golden Globe.

The gritty 70s would have been nothing without her. After a stint as a model, she starred in *The Last Picture Show, The King of Marvin Gardens, Exorcist,* and *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore*. And when the best material dried up in the 80s and 90s, she diligently minded the store, after her mentor, Lee Strasberg, died, and served as co-artistic director of the Actors Studio, thereby avoiding all potential sources of ridicule (there was no workout video, no moronic lk show). In 2000 she was back, giving another generation of scrappy, urban directors something to get all worked up about. First she starred in *The Yards;* then, in *Requiem for a Dream,* she portrayed a Brooklyn woman hooked on game shows and diet pills, spiraling into hell. Which brings us to the year-2000 feather in her cap: the enormously successful re-release of *The Exorcist.*

Photographed by Herb Ritts in West Hollywood, California, on January 5, 2001.

THE **ENSEMBLE**

CHRISTOPHER GUEST'S REPERTORY COMPANY

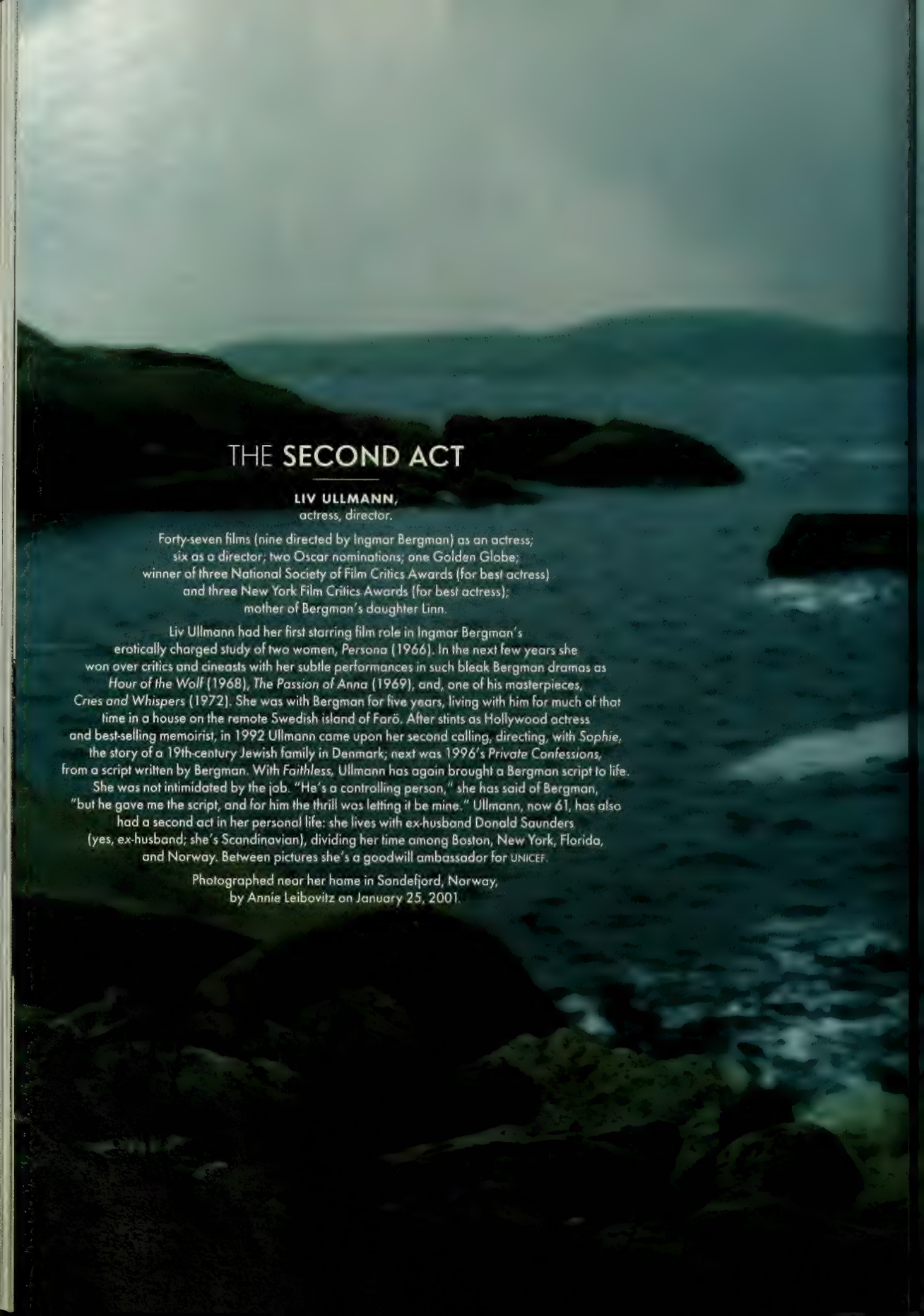
From left: Michael Hitchcock, Deborah Theaker, Fred Willard, Ed Begley Jr., Larry Miller, Don Lake, Bob Balaban (above), Linda Kash, Catherine O'Hara, Scott Williamson, Parker Posey (above), Michael McKean, Christopher Guest, and Eugene Levy.

If this were 1937, President Roosevelt would be tapping Christopher Guest to run the Works Progress Administration's Federal Comedy Project (otherwise known as the F.C.P.), a lean, sinewy operation committed to entertaining the masses with first-rate improvisational comedy produced at microscopic budgets. As it is, Guest oversees and dreams up scenarios for a troupe whose members, in various combinations, have turned out *This Is Spinal Tap* (1984), *Waiting for Guffman* (1997), and last year's *Best in Show*—which only happen to be the three greatest vérité-comedy movies of all time. As a co-star and co-writer of all three films and the director of the last two, Guest warrants our copious thanks for (A) providing a platform for two extraordinary comic talents orphaned by the demise of *SCTV*, Catherine O'Hara and Eugene Levy; (B) tapping the hitherto unknown reserves of comic talent in the indie ingenue Parker Posey; and (C) proving that screen comedy these days needn't be art-house cynical or Adam Sandler broad.

Photographed by Art Streiber in Los Angeles on January 12, 2001.







THE SECOND ACT

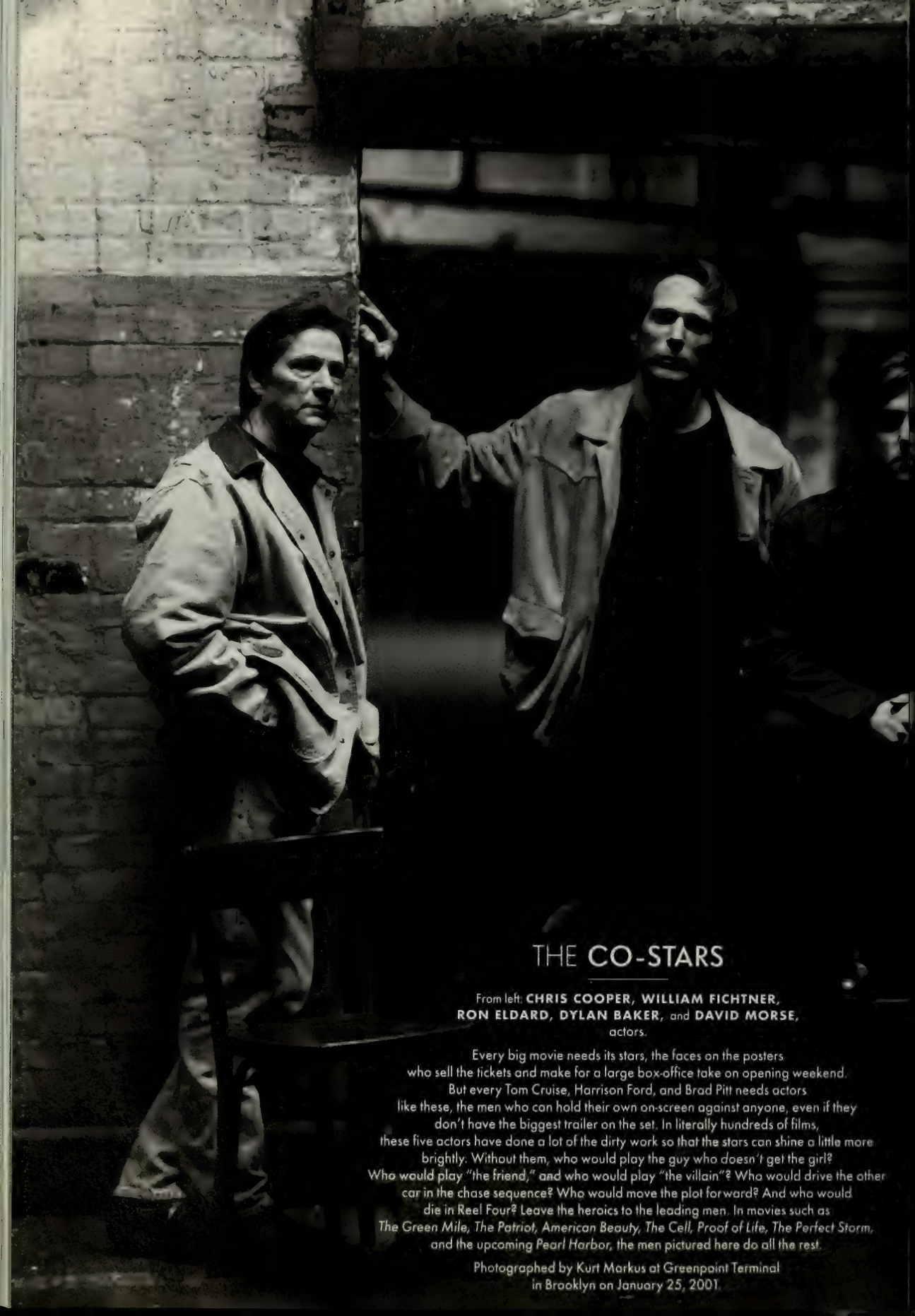
LIV ULLMANN,
actress, director.

Forty-seven films (nine directed by Ingmar Bergman) as an actress;
six as a director; two Oscar nominations; one Golden Globe;
winner of three National Society of Film Critics Awards (for best actress)
and three New York Film Critics Awards (for best actress);
mother of Bergman's daughter Linn.

Liv Ullmann had her first starring film role in Ingmar Bergman's erotically charged study of two women, *Persona* (1966). In the next few years she won over critics and cineasts with her subtle performances in such bleak Bergman dramas as *Hour of the Wolf* (1968), *The Passion of Anna* (1969), and, one of his masterpieces, *Cries and Whispers* (1972). She was with Bergman for five years, living with him for much of that time in a house on the remote Swedish island of Farö. After stints as Hollywood actress and best-selling memoirist, in 1992 Ullmann came upon her second calling, directing, with *Sophie*, the story of a 19th-century Jewish family in Denmark; next was 1996's *Private Confessions*, from a script written by Bergman. With *Faithless*, Ullmann has again brought a Bergman script to life. She was not intimidated by the job. "He's a controlling person," she has said of Bergman, "but he gave me the script, and for him the thrill was letting it be mine." Ullmann, now 61, has also had a second act in her personal life: she lives with ex-husband Donald Saunders (yes, ex-husband; she's Scandinavian), dividing her time among Boston, New York, Florida, and Norway. Between pictures she's a goodwill ambassador for UNICEF.

Photographed near her home in Sondefjord, Norway,
by Annie Leibovitz on January 25, 2001.





THE CO-STARS

From left: **CHRIS COOPER, WILLIAM FICHTNER, RON ELDARD, DYLAN BAKER,** and **DAVID MORSE,** actors.

Every big movie needs its stars, the faces on the posters who sell the tickets and make for a large box-office take on opening weekend. But every Tom Cruise, Harrison Ford, and Brad Pitt needs actors like these, the men who can hold their own on-screen against anyone, even if they don't have the biggest trailer on the set. In literally hundreds of films, these five actors have done a lot of the dirty work so that the stars can shine a little more brightly. Without them, who would play the guy who *doesn't* get the girl? Who would play "the friend," and who would play "the villain"? Who would drive the other car in the chase sequence? Who would move the plot forward? And who would die in Reel Four? Leave the heroics to the leading men. In movies such as *The Green Mile, The Patriot, American Beauty, The Cell, Proof of Life, The Perfect Storm,* and the upcoming *Pearl Harbor,* the men pictured here do all the rest.

Photographed by Kurt Markus at Greenpoint Terminal in Brooklyn on January 25, 2001.





THE SCENE-STEALER

BENICIO DEL TORO,
actor, icon in the making, the best thing to happen
to puffy eyes since Robert Mitchum.

Twenty-four films, including four in the winter 2000–2001
season alone; one Oscar nomination and one Golden Globe for *Traffic*;
one unlikely modeling engagement for H&M.

Del Toro broke through as a hoodlum named
Fenster in 1995's *The Usual Suspects*, looking like a Zegna model but sou
like a basso version of Señor Wences's hand—a what-the-hell
performance that instantly established him as a cult favorite within the a
ranks. His gonzo reputation was only stoked by his appearance as
Hunter Thompson's drug buddy in Terry Gilliam's chaotic *Fear and Loat*
in Las Vegas (1998), but with Steven Soderbergh's *Traffic*
he's toned the act way down and has gotten his best results yet. As narc
cop Javier Rodriguez Rodriguez, the movie's moral compass,
Del Toro is all inward calculation and solicitous glances—a rare fusion of co
affability. (Most young actors project one or the other.)
Puerto Rico–born but raised for much of his childhood in rural Pennsylv
Del Toro also studied at the Stella Adler Conservatory: a crazy
push-pull of clashing cultures that has rendered him capable of anythi
whether it be playing a faux Hasidic Jew (*Snatch*),
a Mexican (*Traffic*), a Native American (*The Pledge*), or, er,
someone named Fenster.

Photographed by Herb Ritts in West Hollywood,
California, on January 18, 2001.







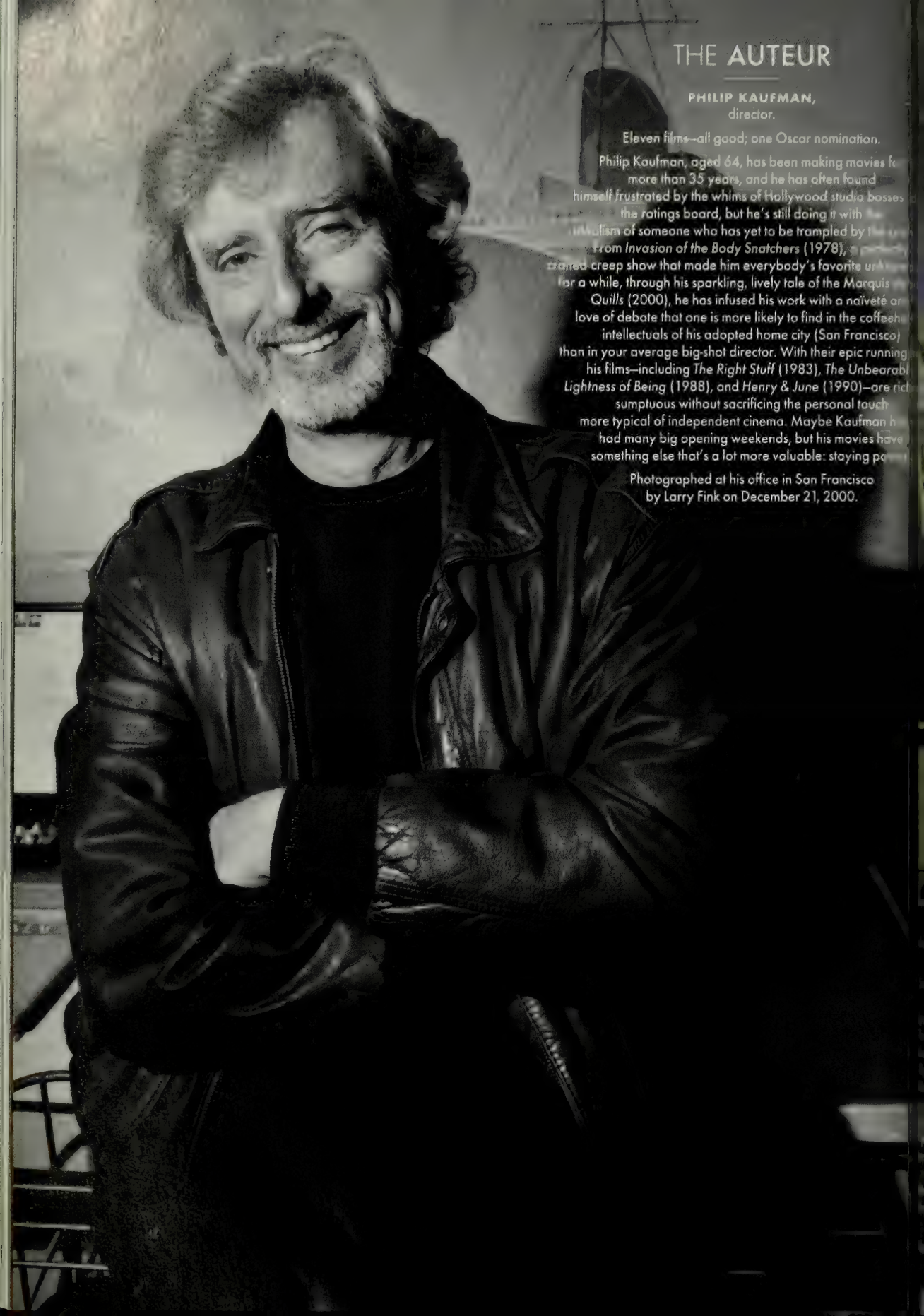
THE DYNAMIC DUO

STEVEN SPIELBERG and **JOHN WILLIAMS**,
hit-makers.

Spielberg: 18 films as director; five Oscar nominations; three Oscars;
the American Film Institute Life Achievement Award (1995); two Golden Globes;
an honorary knighthood; one Irving G. Thalberg Memorial Award.
Williams: more than 100 film scores; three Golden Globes;
22 Oscar nominations; five Oscars.

The great American tradition of rooting for the underdog all too often
mutates into a green-eyed hatred of the impossibly successful,
and thus Steven Spielberg and John Williams find themselves occasionally attacked
as purveyors of sentimental, upper-middlebrow entertainment.
But let's not forget just what allowed these two titans to scale the lofty heights they
now inhabit: *Jaws*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, *E.T.*, *Jurassic Park*,
Schindler's List, and *Saving Private Ryan*, to name a few. Spielberg's uncanny ability
to turn any story, no matter how bleak, into a glowing celebration of
red-white-and-blue ideals has made him the undisputed heavyweight champion of
moviemaking, not just in Hollywood but around the world.
(The Queen of England likes him so much she knighted him.) Williams's scores,
meanwhile, have entered the national consciousness as, quite simply,
the sound of a great film. So, getting down to brass tacks: is there anyone out there
who can't hum the theme to *Jaws*, has never seen *E.T.*, or plans
to miss *A.I.*, the 19th Spielberg-Williams collaboration, due this summer
from Warner Bros.? Anyone?

Photographed by Annie Leibovitz at the Sony Pictures
Studios scoring stage, Culver City, California,
on January 9, 2001.



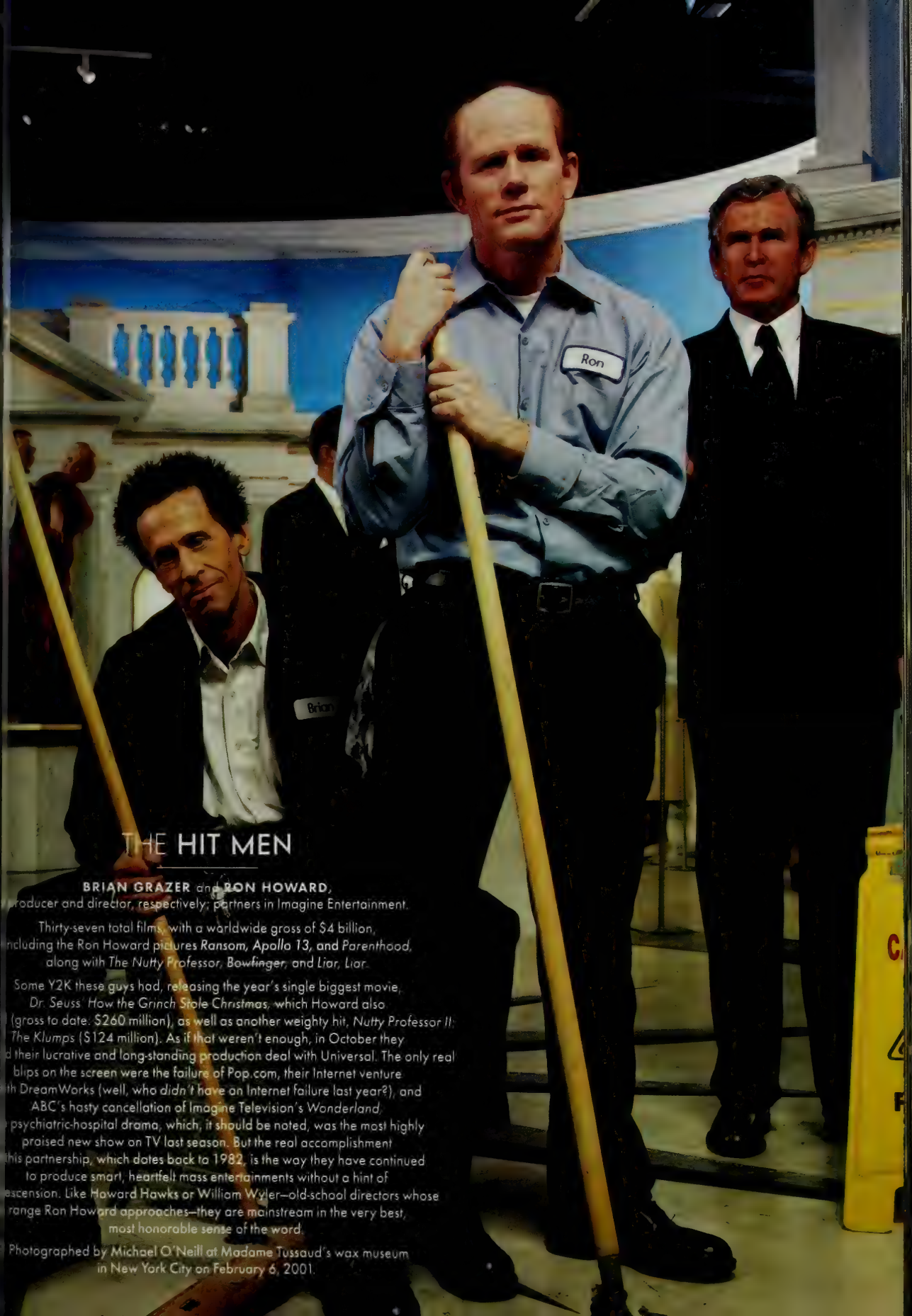
THE AUTEUR

PHILIP KAUFMAN,
director.

Eleven films—all good; one Oscar nomination.

Philip Kaufman, aged 64, has been making movies f more than 35 years, and he has often found himself frustrated by the whims of Hollywood studio bosses the ratings board, but he's still doing it with ism of someone who has yet to be trampled by t rom *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1978), anged creep show that made him everybody's favorite u for a while, through his sparkling, lively tale of the Marquis *Quills* (2000), he has infused his work with a naïveté a love of debate that one is more likely to find in the coffeeh intellectuals of his adopted home city (San Francisco) than in your average big-shot director. With their epic running his films—including *The Right Stuff* (1983), *The Unbearabl Lightness of Being* (1988), and *Henry & June* (1990)—are rich sumptuous without sacrificing the personal touch more typical of independent cinema. Maybe Kaufman h had many big opening weekends, but his movies have something else that's a lot more valuable: staying po

Photographed at his office in San Francisco by Larry Fink on December 21, 2000.



THE HIT MEN

BRIAN GRAZER and **RON HOWARD**,
producer and director, respectively; partners in Imagine Entertainment.

Thirty-seven total films, with a worldwide gross of $4 billion, including the Ron Howard pictures *Ransom*, *Apollo 13*, and *Parenthood*, along with *The Nutty Professor*, *Bowfinger*, and *Liar, Liar*.

Some Y2K these guys had, releasing the year's single biggest movie, *Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, which Howard also (gross to date: $260 million), as well as another weighty hit, *Nutty Professor II: The Klumps* ($124 million). As if that weren't enough, in October they d their lucrative and long-standing production deal with Universal. The only real blips on the screen were the failure of Pop.com, their Internet venture th DreamWorks (well, who *didn't* have an Internet failure last year?), and ABC's hasty cancellation of Imagine Television's *Wonderland*, psychiatric-hospital drama, which, it should be noted, was the most highly praised new show on TV last season. But the real accomplishment his partnership, which dates back to 1982, is the way they have continued to produce smart, heartfelt mass entertainments without a hint of escension. Like Howard Hawks or William Wyler—old-school directors whose range Ron Howard approaches—they are mainstream in the very best, most honorable sense of the word.

Photographed by Michael O'Neill at Madame Tussaud's wax museum in New York City on February 6, 2001.



THE **SOPHOMORES**

From left: **KIP PARDUE, SANAA LATHAN, SHANNYN SOSSAMON, MONET MAZUR, DESMOND HARRINGTON, JOHNNY KNOXVILLE,** and **AMY SMART,** actors.

This year's faces of young Hollywood didn't make it onto the cover, but that doesn't mean we are any less confident about their prospects for success. Model turned actor Kip Pardue played a quarterback under Coach Denzel Washington in *Remember the Titans;* he next stars as a racecar driver opposite Sly Stallone in Renny Harlin's *Driven.* Sanaa Lathan scored points in *Love & Basketball,* then made beautiful music with Wesley Snipes in HBO's *Disappearing Acts.* This year, D.J./ingenue Shannyn Sossamon stars in *A Knight's Tale* and *40 Days and 40 Nights.* Monet Mazur will appear in four films in 2001, including *Angel Eyes,* in which she competes for screen time with Jennifer Lopez. Bronx-born bad boy Desmond Harrington's looks will be on full display in *Riding in Cars with Boys* and *We Were Soldiers Once . . . and Young.* Johnny Knoxville, the masochistic ringleader of MTV's *Jackass,* is graduating to the big screen with four new films, including Barry Sonnenfeld's *Big Trouble.* Finally, girl next door Amy Smart first caught notice as the ultimate boarding-school dream girl in *Outside Providence,* but her career will switch into fifth gear when she heads the cast of *Rat Race,* about a high-stakes treasure hunt. Ladies and gentlemen, start your engines.

Photographed by Julian Broad at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles on January 27, 2001.



THE COLT

JOAQUIN PHOENIX,
actor.

[illegible] Oscar nomination, for *Gladiator.*

Joaquin Phoenix, 26, must be the most underestimated actor of his generation. For one thing, he has had to labor under his late brother River's shadow. For another, as he himself has noted, "every film I do, I meet resistance going into it, and by the time it comes out, everyone says, 'Well, you were the obvious choice.'" It's true. As much as we admired his portrayal of a teenage loser with a wicked hard-on for Nicole Kidman in *To Die For*—and we admired it a lot—we couldn't picture him in *Gladiator* as Commodus, the most unfortunately named of all Roman emperors except, perhaps, for Probus. It would have been like casting Sal Mineo as a heavy in *Spartacus*. But not only did Phoenix make believers out of audiences, future employers, and Academy members—his Commodus was, hands down, the year's most memorable villain: compellingly evil yet boyishly vulnerable, murderously twisted but also hurtin' inside 'cause no one really understands him, especially not his dad. Now we know Joaquin can do anything, and last year he went on to prove it in quick succession with roles as a smooth operator in *The Yards* and then as the Marquis de Sade's virtuous but conflicted jailer-priest in *Quills*.

Photographed by Annie Leibovitz in New York City on January 5, 2001.

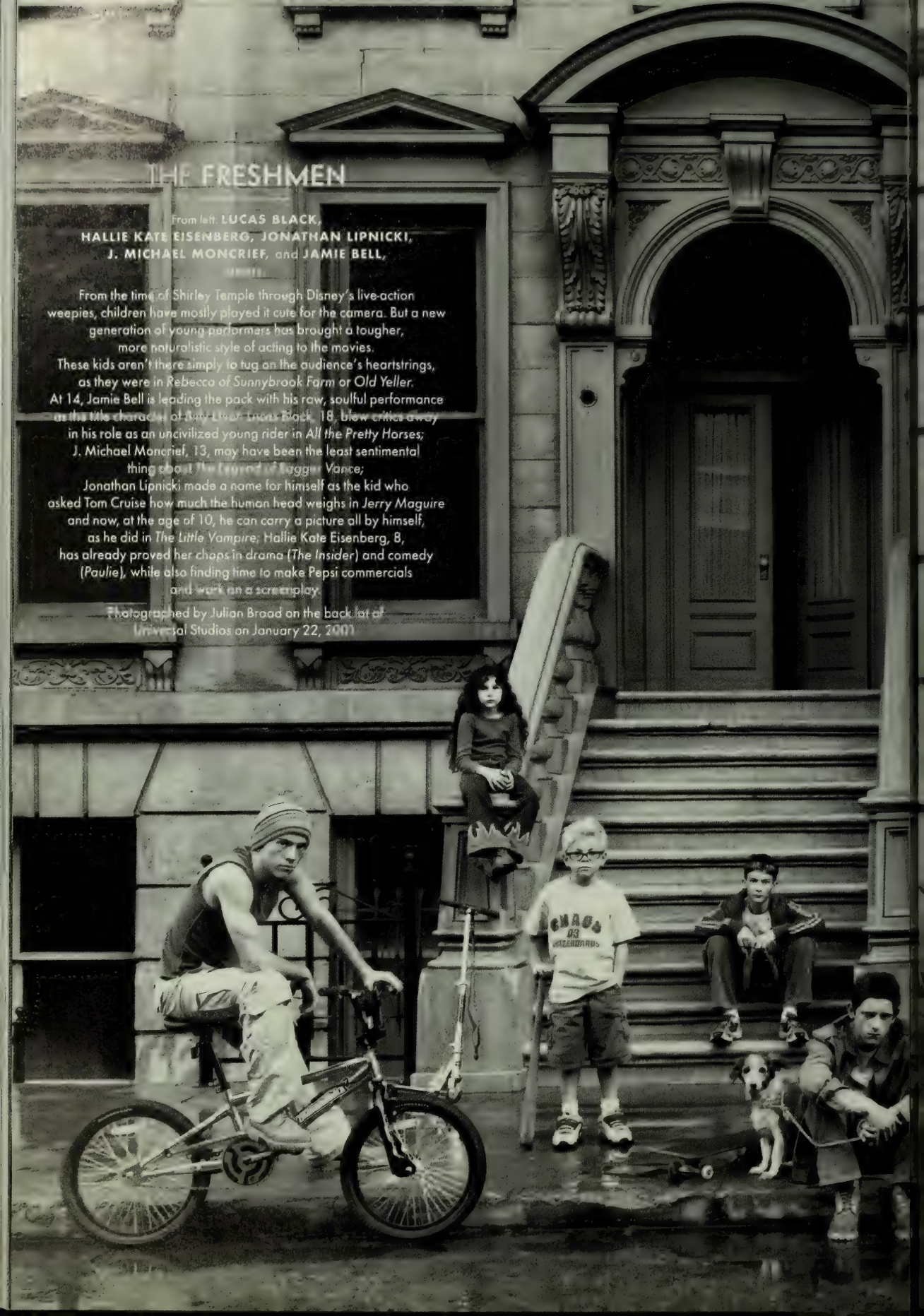
THE **BREAKOUT**

LAURA LINNEY,
actress.

ve films; eight plays; one Oscar nomination, for *You Can Count on M*

Maybe it was the film's innocuously lame title, *You Can Count on Me* (isn't that an 'N Sync ballad?), that led us t call it "the Laura Linney Movie" before we'd even seen it r were entirely sure who, in fact, Laura Linney was. Having finally caught *You Can Count on Me*—and with all due respect to her h-perfect co-stars, Mark Ruffalo, Matthew Broderick, and Rory Cul we realized that it really is the Laura Linney Movie. She lds down the center of the year's most suspenseful film—suspense because there are so many moments when this honest, quiet, and autifully observed family drama could have spun out on a Hollyw schmaltz slick. Until now, Linney was probably best known having played Mary Ann Singleton in the TV adaptation of Armist Maupin's *Tales of the City* and Jim Carrey's brittle wife in *The Truman Show*—and for having the industry's most flawless mplexion. But there's no one better at dissecting the cheerfully pl tactics we all use to get through a day's worth of social interactions, and at showing us the bottom-line costs.

Photographed by Firooz Zahedi
at the Radio City Music Hall lounge in New York City
on January 16, 2001.

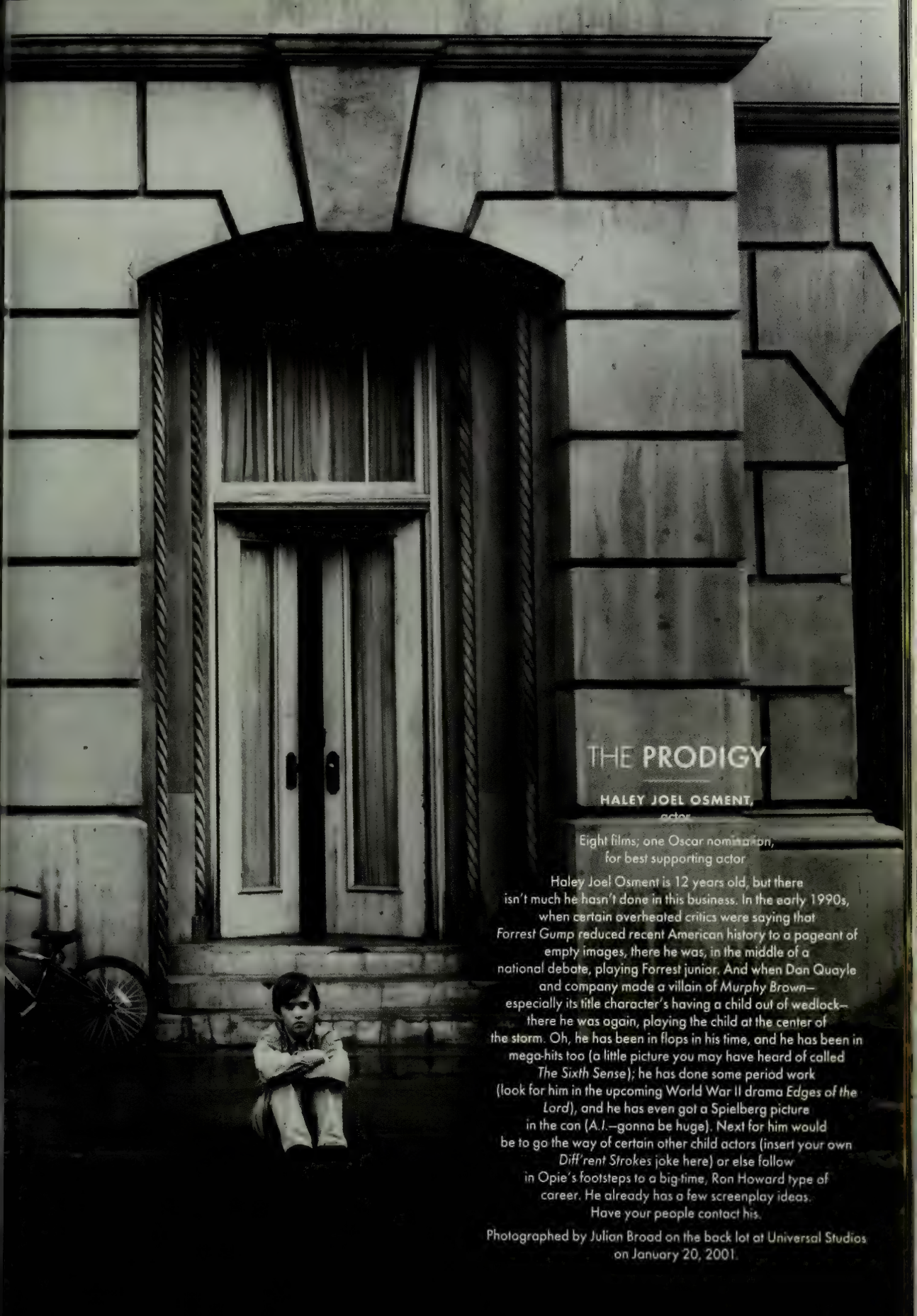


THE FRESHMEN

From left: **LUCAS BLACK, HALLIE KATE EISENBERG, JONATHAN LIPNICKI, J. MICHAEL MONCRIEF,** and **JAMIE BELL,**

From the time of Shirley Temple through Disney's live-action weepies, children have mostly played it cute for the camera. But a new generation of young performers has brought a tougher, more naturalistic style of acting to the movies. These kids aren't there simply to tug on the audience's heartstrings, as they were in *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* or *Old Yeller*. At 14, Jamie Bell is leading the pack with his raw, soulful performance as the title character of *Billy Elliot*. Lucas Black, 18, blew critics away in his role as an uncivilized young rider in *All the Pretty Horses;* J. Michael Moncrief, 13, may have been the least sentimental thing about *The Legend of Bagger Vance;* Jonathan Lipnicki made a name for himself as the kid who asked Tom Cruise how much the human head weighs in *Jerry Maguire* and now, at the age of 10, he can carry a picture all by himself, as he did in *The Little Vampire;* Hallie Kate Eisenberg, 8, has already proved her chops in drama (*The Insider*) and comedy (*Paulie*), while also finding time to make Pepsi commercials and work on a screenplay.

Photographed by Julian Broad on the back lot of Universal Studios on January 22, 2001



THE PRODIGY

HALEY JOEL OSMENT,
actor

Eight films; one Oscar nomination,
for best supporting actor

Haley Joel Osment is 12 years old, but there isn't much he hasn't done in this business. In the early 1990s, when certain overheated critics were saying that *Forrest Gump* reduced recent American history to a pageant of empty images, there he was, in the middle of a national debate, playing Forrest junior. And when Dan Quayle and company made a villain of *Murphy Brown*—especially its title character's having a child out of wedlock—there he was again, playing the child at the center of the storm. Oh, he has been in flops in his time, and he has been in mega-hits too (a little picture you may have heard of called *The Sixth Sense*); he has done some period work (look for him in the upcoming World War II drama *Edges of the Lord*), and he has even got a Spielberg picture in the can (*A.I.*—gonna be huge). Next for him would be to go the way of certain other child actors (insert your own *Diff'rent Strokes* joke here) or else follow in Opie's footsteps to a big-time, Ron Howard type of career. He already has a few screenplay ideas. Have your people contact his.

Photographed by Julian Broad on the back lot at Universal Studios on January 20, 2001.

THE GATEKEEPERS

The co-managing directors of the public-relations firm **PMK**, from left: **LESLEE DART, PAT KINGSLEY**, and **LOIS SMITH.**

Not since the heyday of MGM have three little letters wielded so much power. Meet Pat Kingsley, Lois Smith, and Leslee Dart, the publicity juggernaut that represents Hollywood's A-list: Tom, Nicole, Al, Michelle, Uma, Keanu, the other Tom, and so forth. A typical day finds them declining offers from the television programs and magazines they consider small potatoes, while playing hardball with the minor major-leaguers. You want Charlize? Put her on the cover or take a hike. For the celebrity clients, the savvy career guidance and general ego-preservation comes at a high price, and it's worth every penny. But don't expect to see any of these women air-kissing on the red carpet. This unimpressed outfit thinks and exists way outside the boundaries of gift-basket Hollywood. Kingsley, the get-to-the-point leader of the pack, lives quietly in Pacific Palisades; Smith, the nurturing one, lives in suburban New York; and Dart, who works out of New York City, counts one person above all her fabulous clients—her three-year-old son.

Photographed by Firooz Zahedi in New York City on February 11, 2001.





THE SCANDALIST

KENNETH ANGER
filmmaker, author.

Eleven films; two books

Growing up in Hollywood, Kenneth Anger made his first short film, *Who's Rocking My Dreamboat?*, at age nine. His follow-up, the gorgeously dreamy *Fireworks*, was made in 1947, when he was 17. This visionary 20-minute film, complete with sets, costumes, and dream sequences, made long before the advent of the Sundance Film Festival and digital video, is among the first of the great D.I.Y. films. In the 1950s and 60s, Anger helped pioneer the American underground-film movement, an inspiration to Andy Warhol and Todd Haynes, though his gritty and often gay-themed allegorical films were initially banned in the U.S. But Anger's truest passion may be the honest, hidden pulse of his hometown itself, whose seamier side he chronicles in the landmark *Hollywood Babylon* books—if you want to know whose lawns Tallulah Bankhead was trimming, or study a grisly crime-scene photo of the Blue Dahlia murder site, these are the books for you. With two volumes already published, Anger has finished a third. But until it finds a publisher (the first book was released here in 1975, 15 years after it was published in France), Anger continues his work as a filmmaker, showing Hollywood what it could be—instead of what it is.

Photographed in the living room of his Los Angeles home by Jason Schmidt on September 16, 2000



THE BOY NEXT DOOR

HENRY THOMAS,
actor, part-time rancher.

Sixteen films.

He went from starring in the biggest movie of all time, *E.T.*, to renting it out to curious customers at a video store in Texas. Since his days behind the counter, Henry Thomas has gotten back into movies—if not in a big way then at least in a legitimate way. Little by little, with roles in several independent movies—*Niagara, Niagara; Suicide Kings; Fever; Highjacking Hollywood;* and the highly praised *A Good Baby*—he has been leaving his most famous character, a sad-eyed kid named Elliot who befriends an alien, far behind. Born and raised in San Antonio, Thomas put his Texas upbringing to good use in this year's acclaimed *All the Pretty Horses*. He looked completely at ease in the role of the mostly silent Lacey Rawlins, and unlike certain movie cowboys over the years, he clearly knew how to sit on a horse.

Photographed at his home in Rome by Jonas Karlsson on January 21, 2001.



THE MAESTRO

DINO DE LAURENTIIS,
producer, last of the big-time spenders.

One hundred twenty films; three Oscars, including this year's Irving G. Thalberg Memorial Award for lifetime achievement in

"Every picture I produce myself.
I work very near the screenplay writer. I select the director.
Then I select the cast. Then I leave the director alone."

Over the last 60 years, the films of the 82-year-old De Laurentiis have cemented his reputation as "the Cecil B. DeMille of Italy." Major hits: *War and Peace* (1956), *La Strada* (which won the 1956 Oscar for best foreign film), *The Valachi Papers* (1972), *Serpico* (1973), *Death Wish* (1974), *Three Days of the Condor* (1975), *Blue Velvet* (1986), and *Hannibal* (2001). De Laurentiis Productions is already at work on the *Hannibal* prequel, *Red Dragon*, for wh he has offered his friend Sir Anthony Hopkins $20 million, a record for a British star. While a struggling actor in his nativ Italy, De Laurentiis persuaded a shopkeeper to give him a pair of black shoes. Years later, when the shopkeeper neede a new job, De Laurentiis put him in charge of his wardrobe department because the man was "willing to trust-d my face." To this day, De Laurentiis often wears black shoes, believing they bring him luck.

Photographed at his Los Angeles home, with his wife, Martha and two daughters, by Sam Jones.



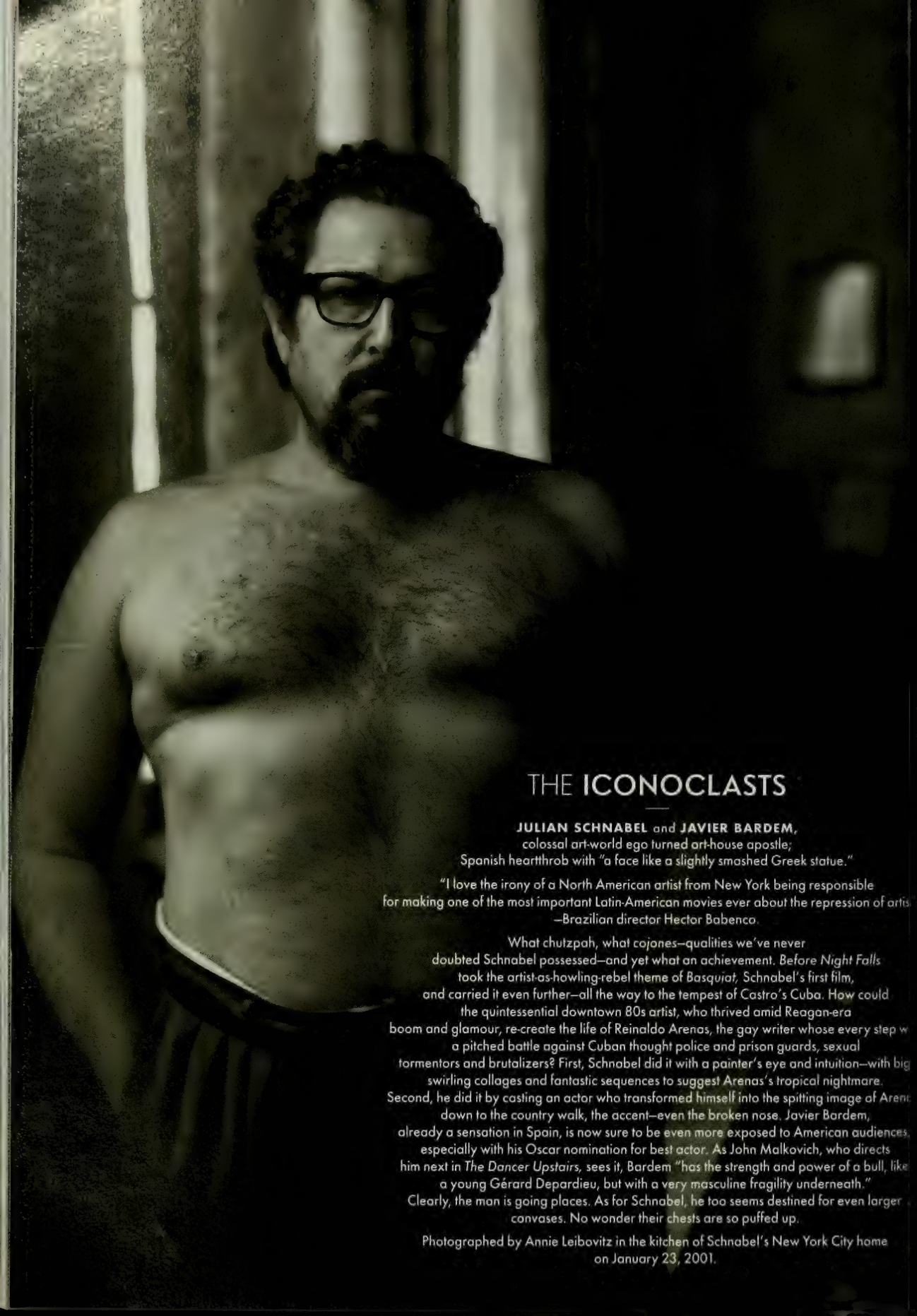
THE ACTIVISTS

OSSIE DAVIS and **RUBY DEE,** actors.

More than 30 collaborations on stage, screen, TV, and radio; more than a dozen awards, rately and together; one remarkably frank memoir, *Vith Ossie and Ruby: In This Life Together* (1998); three children and seven grandchildren.

safe to say that there was no second-guessing when the Screen Actors Guild decided to present its ne Achievement Award this month to Ossie Davis, 83, Ruby Dee, 76. Their soulful performances together seminal African-American dramas as *A Raisin in the Sun* Broadway in 1959 and *Do the Right Thing* in 1989 ed for three generations of audiences the despair that can black Americans apart and the hope that can keep e. And while show business has brought this couple fame fluence, they have used it not as a way to escape those but as a means to attract attention to the struggle for racial ality. That passion for fighting the good fight—which led them to M.C. Martin Luther King Jr.'s 1963 ch on Washington and to suffer arrest for protesting the shooting of Amadou Diallo in New York 99—remains the glue in their unheard-of-in-Hollywood 52-year marriage.

graphed by Michael O'Neill at the First Baptist Church in New York City on January 25, 2001.



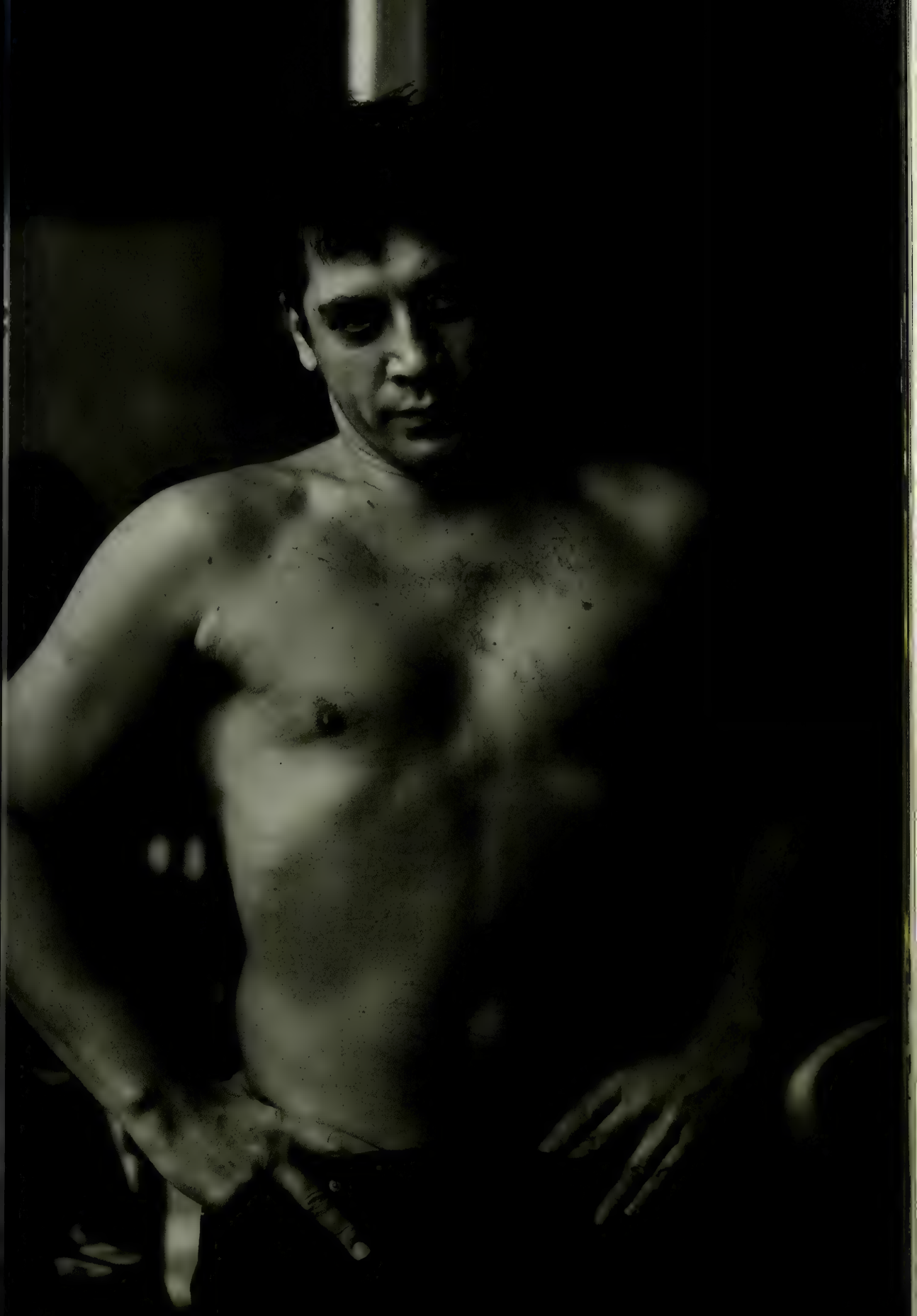
THE ICONOCLASTS

JULIAN SCHNABEL and **JAVIER BARDEM,**
colossal art-world ego turned art-house apostle;
Spanish heartthrob with "a face like a slightly smashed Greek statue."

"I love the irony of a North American artist from New York being responsible for making one of the most important Latin-American movies ever about the repression of artis —Brazilian director Hector Babenco.

What chutzpah, what *cojones*—qualities we've never doubted Schnabel possessed—and yet what an achievement. *Before Night Falls* took the artist-as-howling-rebel theme of *Basquiat,* Schnabel's first film, and carried it even further—all the way to the tempest of Castro's Cuba. How could the quintessential downtown 80s artist, who thrived amid Reagan-era boom and glamour, re-create the life of Reinaldo Arenas, the gay writer whose every step w a pitched battle against Cuban thought police and prison guards, sexual tormentors and brutalizers? First, Schnabel did it with a painter's eye and intuition—with big swirling collages and fantastic sequences to suggest Arenas's tropical nightmare. Second, he did it by casting an actor who transformed himself into the spitting image of Aren down to the country walk, the accent—even the broken nose. Javier Bardem, already a sensation in Spain, is now sure to be even more exposed to American audiences, especially with his Oscar nomination for best actor. As John Malkovich, who directs him next in *The Dancer Upstairs,* sees it, Bardem "has the strength and power of a bull, like a young Gérard Depardieu, but with a very masculine fragility underneath." Clearly, the man is going places. As for Schnabel, he too seems destined for even larger canvases. No wonder their chests are so puffed up.

Photographed by Annie Leibovitz in the kitchen of Schnabel's New York City home on January 23, 2001.





THE MULTITASKER

ANG LEE,
director, screenwriter, generally acknowledged as the softest-spoken control freak in the business.

Seven films; two Oscar nominations—best picture and best director—for *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (which received a total of 10 Oscar nominations); one Golden Globe.

It is a commonplace, when discussing Ang Lee's career, to remark upon his ability to dance across film genres as nimbly as Michelle Yeoh skims rooftops in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. He's been making feature films for only a decade and already he's directed a Taiwanese family drama (*Eat Drink Man Woman*), a Jane Austen adaptation (*Sense and Sensibility*), an American tale of 1970s ennui (*The Ice Storm*), a Civil War Western (*Ride with the Devil*), and now, with *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, a martial-arts film that is as much about love and regret and responsibility as it is about bodies hurtling through space and people getting kicked in the head. By any reckoning this is a remarkable body of work, but then again, many contemporary directors have catholic tastes. (Try connecting the dots between *Close Encounters of the Third Kind, The Color Purple, Schindler's List,* and *The Lost World*.) What's interesting about Lee is that, no matter where or in what era his films are set, he shows us how people search for happiness while playing out whatever hand of social conventions they've been dealt. He is, in short, our reigning master of the comedy of manners. Not that he'll let anyone pin him down: his next project is *The Incredible Hulk*. We're more than curious.

Photographed in his many guises by Annie Leibovitz at the Good Machine production company in New York City on January 31, 2001.


THE WEDDING
BANQUET
ウェディング・バンケット
Can You Take
PERCEPTO?
Tingler
VINCENT PRICE
KANSAS



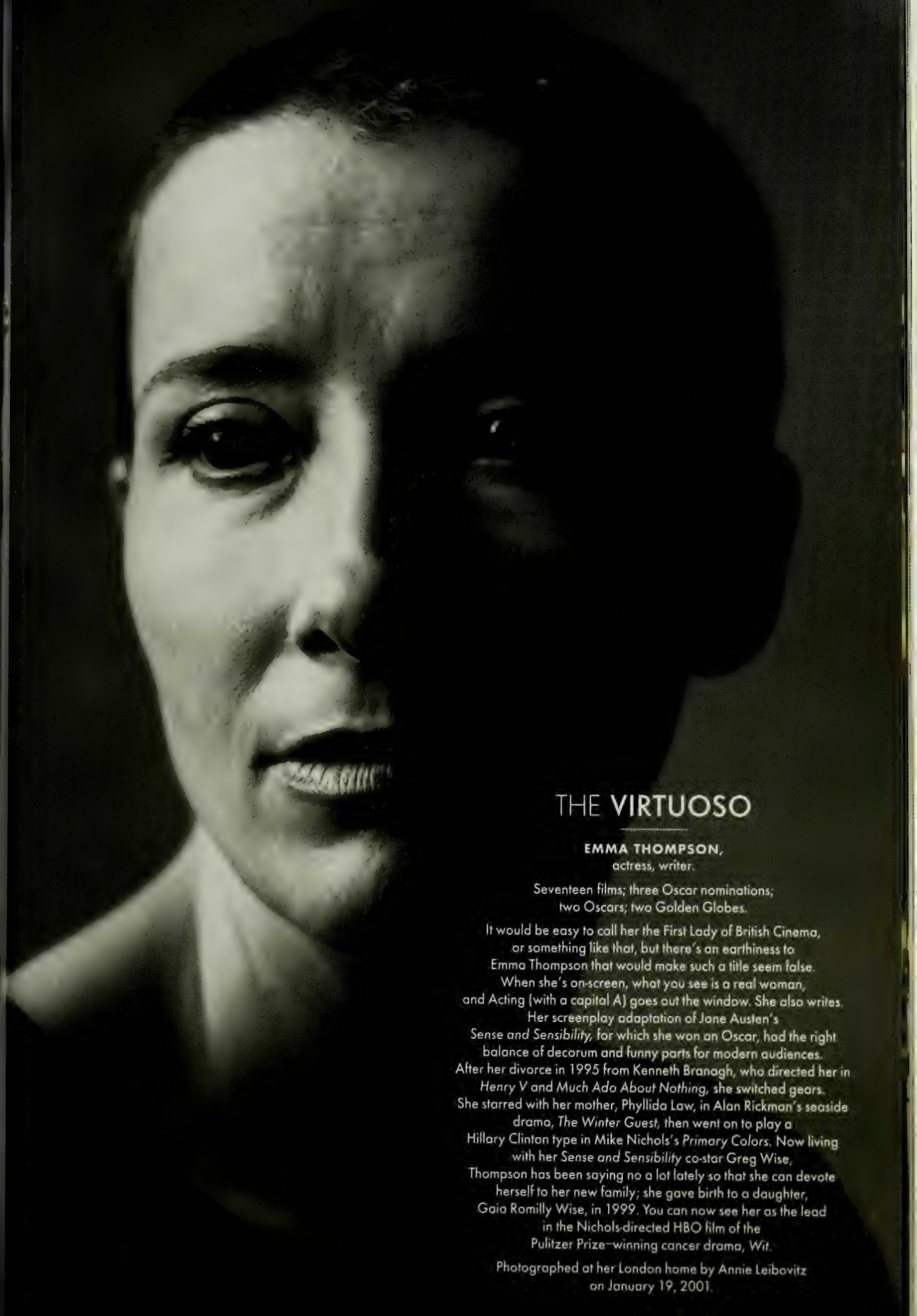
THE **GOLDEN GIRL**

KATE HUDSON,
actress.

Seven films; one best-supporting-actress Golden Globe, for *Almost Famous;* one Oscar nomination, for *Almost Famous.*

It's almost ridiculous how much Kate Hudson has going for her these days: she's beautiful, 21 years old, has a great mom (Goldie Hawn) and "Pa" (Kurt Russell), and then there's her career. Thanks to her subtle performance as Penny Lane, the fragile groupie in Cameron Crowe's *Almost Famous,* Hudson can forgo the kinds of vapid independent movies that got her here (*200 Cigarettes, Gossip*) and do just about any project she chooses. Indeed, you might be tempted to smack her were it not for the fact that she's so damned adorable. Truth is, some curveballs have been thrown her way. First there was the contretemps with her estranged father, Bill Hudson, the 70s television comedian and musician. Then there was the flak she got for dating Chris Robinson, the gangly 34-year-old front man of the Black Crowes, who believes drugs promote creativity, and once collapsed while on tour from malnutrition. In response, Hudson did what only a true free spirit would do and married him—and now the whole family's nuts about him. May all her choices be so inspired.

Photographed by Annie Leibovitz at Shenandoah Farm in Hopewell Junction, New York, on July 15, 2000.



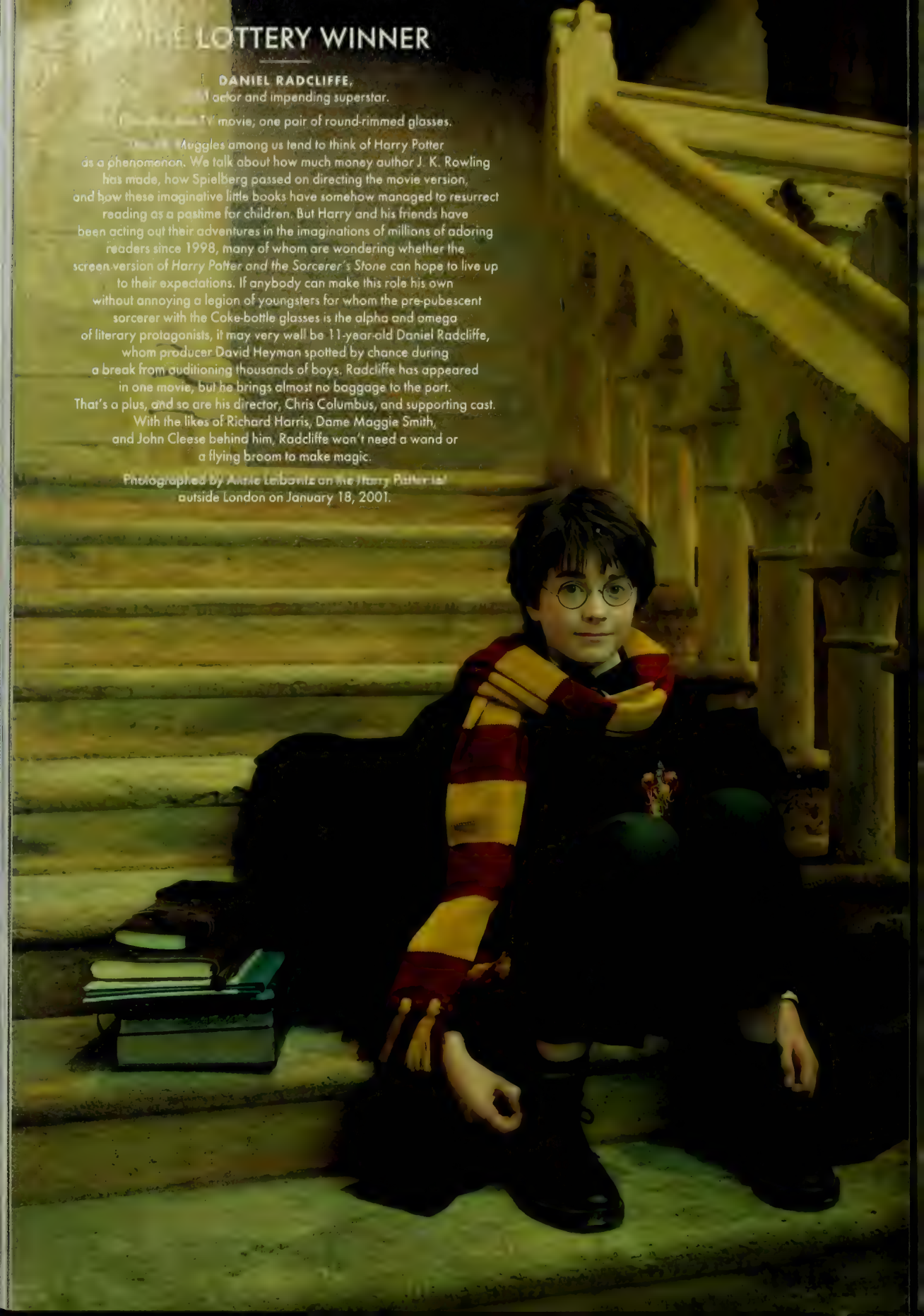
THE VIRTUOSO

EMMA THOMPSON,
actress, writer.

Seventeen films; three Oscar nominations;
two Oscars; two Golden Globes.

It would be easy to call her the First Lady of British Cinema, or something like that, but there's an earthiness to Emma Thompson that would make such a title seem false. When she's on-screen, what you see is a real woman, and Acting (with a capital A) goes out the window. She also writes. Her screenplay adaptation of Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility,* for which she won an Oscar, had the right balance of decorum and funny parts for modern audiences. After her divorce in 1995 from Kenneth Branagh, who directed her in *Henry V* and *Much Ado About Nothing,* she switched gears. She starred with her mother, Phyllida Law, in Alan Rickman's seaside drama, *The Winter Guest,* then went on to play a Hillary Clinton type in Mike Nichols's *Primary Colors.* Now living with her *Sense and Sensibility* co-star Greg Wise, Thompson has been saying no a lot lately so that she can devote herself to her new family; she gave birth to a daughter, Gaia Romilly Wise, in 1999. You can now see her as the lead in the Nichols-directed HBO film of the Pulitzer Prize–winning cancer drama, *Wit.*

Photographed at her London home by Annie Leibovitz on January 19, 2001.



THE LOTTERY WINNER

DANIEL RADCLIFFE,
actor and impending superstar.

TV movie; one pair of round-rimmed glasses.

Muggles among us tend to think of Harry Potter as a phenomenon. We talk about how much money author J. K. Rowling has made, how Spielberg passed on directing the movie version, and how these imaginative little books have somehow managed to resurrect reading as a pastime for children. But Harry and his friends have been acting out their adventures in the imaginations of millions of adoring readers since 1998, many of whom are wondering whether the screen version of *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* can hope to live up to their expectations. If anybody can make this role his own without annoying a legion of youngsters for whom the pre-pubescent sorcerer with the Coke-bottle glasses is the alpha and omega of literary protagonists, it may very well be 11-year-old Daniel Radcliffe, whom producer David Heyman spotted by chance during a break from auditioning thousands of boys. Radcliffe has appeared in one movie, but he brings almost no baggage to the part. That's a plus, and so are his director, Chris Columbus, and supporting cast. With the likes of Richard Harris, Dame Maggie Smith, and John Cleese behind him, Radcliffe won't need a wand or a flying broom to make magic.

Photographed by Annie Leibovitz on the *Harry Potter* set outside London on January 18, 2001.







THE CHAMELEON

WILLEM DAFOE,
actor.

Thirty-eight films, plus one yoga video, which he narrated; two Oscar nominations, for *Platoon* (1986) and *Shadow of the Vampire* (2000); one Obie for "15 years of sustained excellence" with the Wooster Group, where he has participated in more than 20 productions.

Just about every character Willem Dafoe plays seems kind of crazy—even Jesus. Is it Dafoe's devilish face and crocodile smile, his alarmingly sinewy body, or his voice—a slight midwestern twang delivered with the hypnotic deliberateness of an urban con man? Or is it the simple fact that actors as intensely committed as Dafoe are about as rare in Hollywood as fated teeth? His artistic home for the last 23 years has been New York's Wooster Group, the aggressively experimental theater company run by Elizabeth LeCompte, his longtime lover and mother of his 18-year-old son. Finding pathos in such roles as the Christ figure Sergeant Elias in Oliver Stone's *Platoon* and the bloodsucking, gamail-clattering Max Schreck in this year's *Shadow of the Vampire* is easy when you've spent half your life plumbing psychological depths onstage in his deconstructions of classic plays from *The Emperor Jones* to *The Hairy Ape*. Lots of actors would kill for that kind of long-term bohemian-deluxe career (Philip Seymour Hoffman still has a ways to go), but it's normal for Dafoe. As normal as anything he does, anyway.

Photographed by Annie Leibovitz at the Performing Garage in New York City on January 12, 2001.





THE AERIALIST

YUEN WO PING,
director, fight choreographer, actor, producer, writer.

More than 30 directing credits, including the two movies that launched Jackie Chan: *Snake in the Eagle's Shadow* (1978) and *Drunken Master* (1979).

"If I'm not 100 percent focused at every moment, someone could end up dead."

One dreamlike fight scene between Chow Yun Fat and Zhang Ziyi in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* appears to take place high above the ground on the wobbly branches of bamboo trees, but surely it was shot in a studio in front of a blue screen, right? Not with the computer-scorning Taiwanese director and fight choreographer Yuen Wo Ping calling the shots. "It was probably the hardest scene I've ever done," said Yuen. "The only 'special effect' is when we remove the wire in postproduction." Western audiences first encountered Yuen's "wirework" technique in *The Matrix,* but it reached its apotheosis in *Crouching Tiger.* That may be because talented martial artists such as Michelle Yeoh, Zhang Ziyi, and Chow Yun Fat made things easier for Yuen, 55, who had to give Keanu Reeves, Laurence Fishburne, and Carrie-Anne Moss the Mr. Miyagi treatment for four months before *The Matrix* could shoot. Drew Barrymore, Cameron Diaz, Lucy Liu, and Kelly Lynch received a similar crash course from Yuen's brother Cheung Yan, who choreographed *Charlie's Angels.* Like his brother, Yuen Wo Ping learned his moves from their father, Simon Yuen Siu Tin, himself a celebrated actor and fight choreographer, but he broke the gravity barrier on his own.

Photographed (with actor Tiger Chen, right) by Annie Leibovitz in West Hollywood on January 27, 2001.





THE IMP

ALAN CUMMING,
actor, director, man-about-town.

Twenty-four films; one star-making Broadway engagement, as the M.C. in Sam Mendes's 1998 production of *Cabaret;* one new Broadway engagement, with Jennifer Ehle in Joe Mantello's production of Noël Coward's *Design for Living;* one long-ago stint as an "evil woodcutter" in a soap opera in his native Scotland.

Smarminess is not usually a ticket to stardom, but Cumming is so resourceful that he has summoned as many varieties of it as there are Inuit words for snow. He was officiously smarmy in his breakthrough movie role, as a sinister schoolboy in *Circle of Friends;* endearingly smarmy in his capacity as *Cabaret*'s "Willkommen, bienvenue" M.C.; nerdily smarmy as a villainous computer geek in *GoldenEye;* clerically smarmy as Reverend Elton in *Emma;* comically smarmy as Rooster Hannigan in Disney's TV-movie remake of *Annie;* and menacingly smarmy as the mincing hotel clerk who comes on to Tom Cruise in *Eyes Wide Shut.* Now, with his new, Cassavetes-esque movie, *The Anniversary Party,* he's out to prove himself polymathic. He wrote and produced the film with his *Cabaret* co-star Jennifer Jason Leigh (they play a novelist-and-actress couple), and together they shot it on digital video in 19 days, enlisting their groovy friends to play the other parts. Cumming will also be appearing this year in *Company Man, Spy Kids,* and a live-action version of *Josie and the Pussycats*—smarminess quotients to be determined.

Photographed by Herb Ritts in West Hollywood, California, on December 18, 2000.





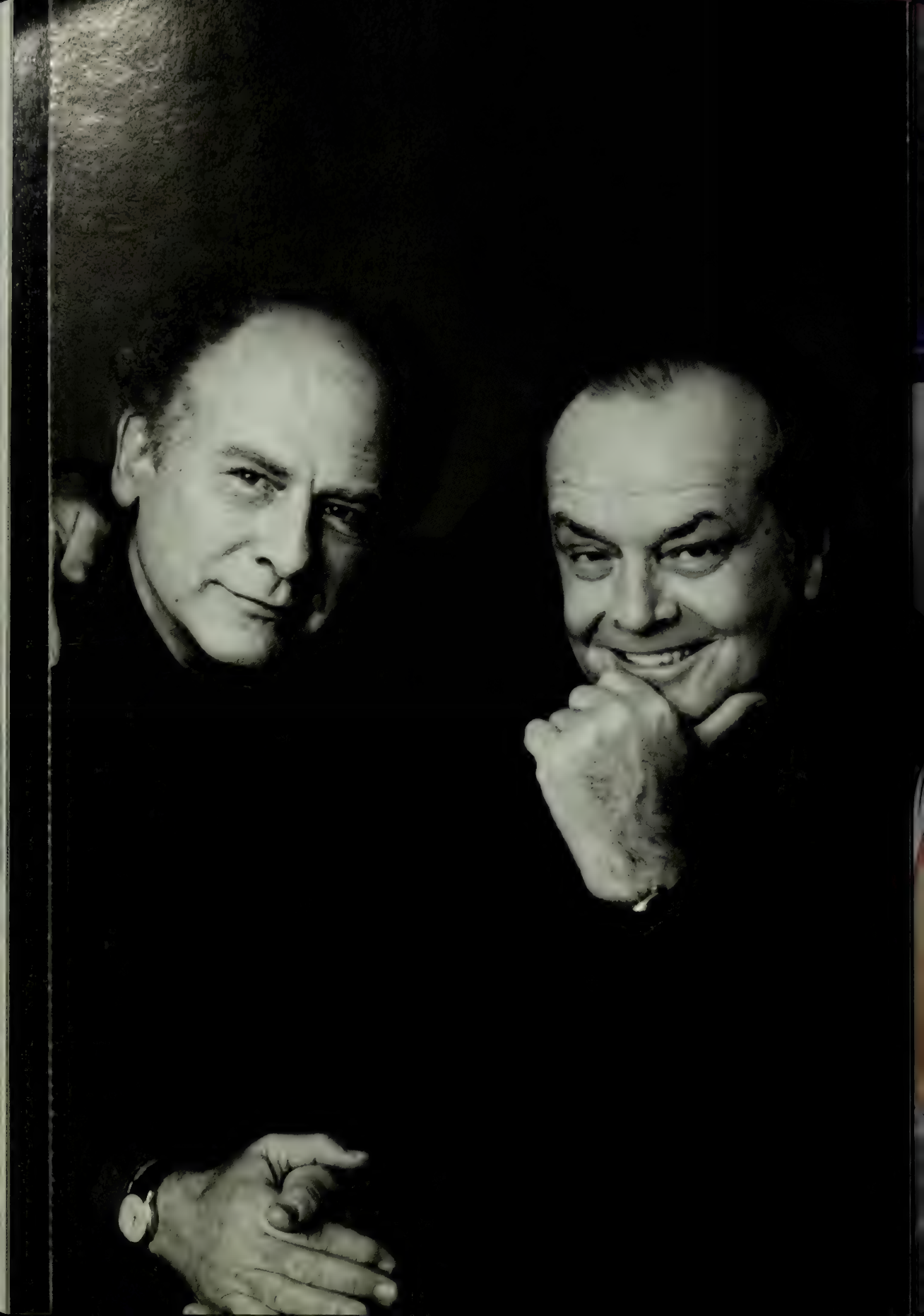
THE **REUNION**

The cast and director of *Carnal Knowledge* on the occasion of its 30th anniversary, from left: **CANDICE BERGEN, ART GARFUNKEL, JACK NICHOLSON, ANN-MARGRET,** and **MIKE NICHOLS.**

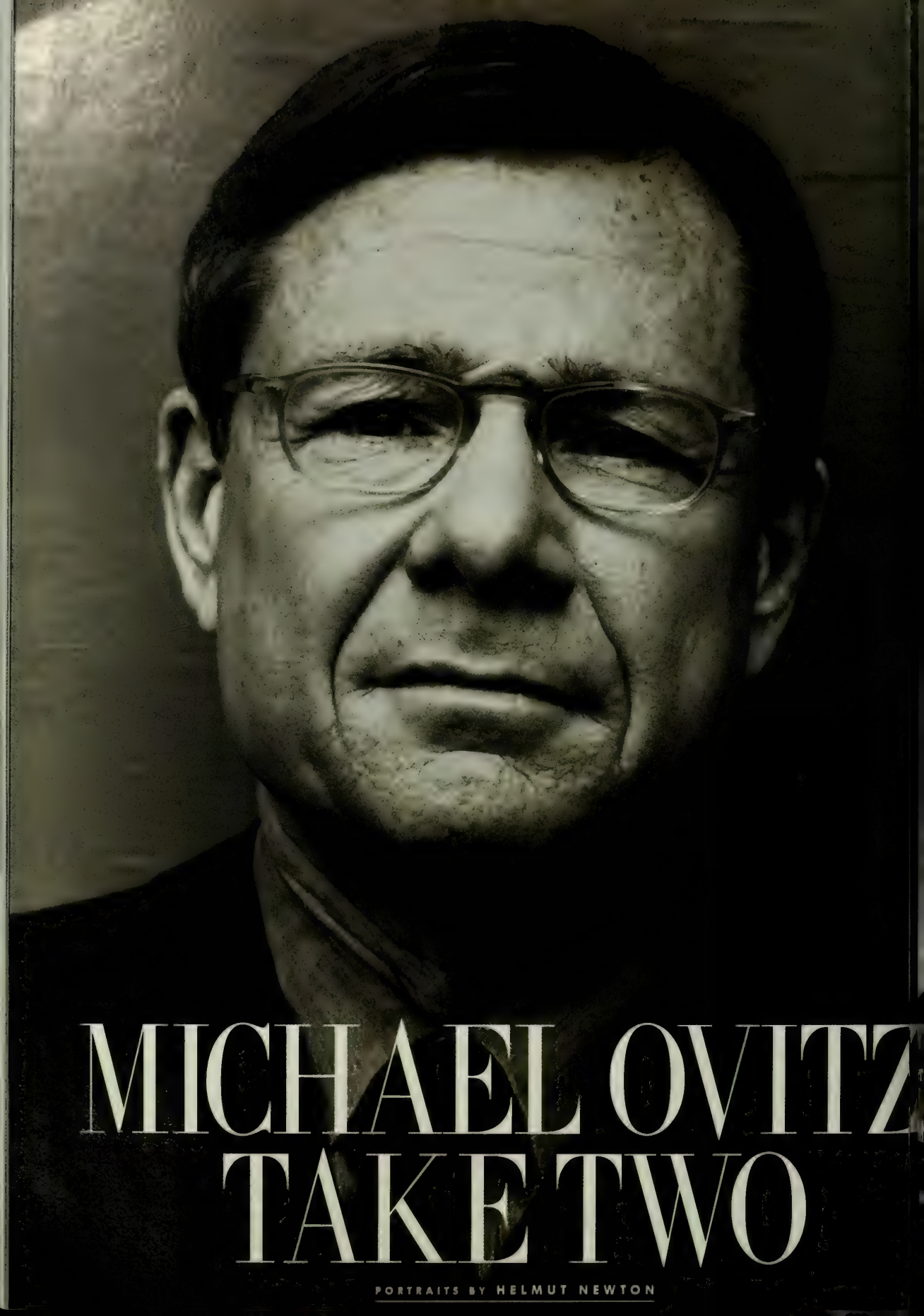
Candice Bergen in profile, the Platonic ideal of a Smithie,
as she wallflowers at a Truman-era college mixer . . . Jack Nicholson,
King of the Amherst Make-Out Artists, to roommate Art Garfunkel: "You feel her up yet?" . . .
Garfunkel, subsequently, to Bergen: "What are you going to do with *your* hands?" . . .
Mike Nichols jump-cutting to Nicholson, on the phone to his best friend's girl, after hearing
what she did, in fact, do with her hands . . . Nicholson, a decade or so
down the road, slamming the door on pill-popping, marriage-minded Ann-Margret: "I'm already
taken—*by me!*" . . . Garfunkel, middle-aged in walrus mustache and Isro, the Platonic
ideal of schnookdom . . . There can be no argument: *Carnal Knowledge*, the dark underbelly of
the Playboy Philosophy, is the wittiest, smartest, and most acutely entertaining
product of masculine self-loathing ever minted. Maybe it's a little too rough on the boys,
but where other relics of the Battle of the Sexes, early-70s division,
have dated as helplessly as a well-thumbed paperback of *Any Woman Can*, Mike Nichols's
film still lacerates—a near-miraculous wedding of his mordantly precise direction,
Jules Feiffer's stiletto-funny script, and a quartet of withering, revelatory performances.
For Bergen, Garfunkel, and Ann-Margret, *Carnal Knowledge* was
a breakthrough. For Nicholson, in the wake of *Easy Rider* and *Five Easy Pieces*,
another notch on the bedpost.

Photographed by Annie Leibovitz on January 28, 2001.


VERSACE




VERSACE



MICHAEL OVITZ
TAKE TWO

PORTRAITS BY HELMUT NEWTON



MAN WITH A PLAN

Michael Ovitz, at home in Brentwood, California, on February 5, 2001, says, "My baggage has been that some people basically hate me."

So Michael Ovitz, once the most powerful man in Hollywood, is back, er his stunningly lucrative 1996 nosedive at Disney and his months in the wilderness. His old enemies still hate him, as he and his hotshot new partner, Rick Yorn, ild a management-and-production company, AMG, with seven symbiotic departments and clients such as Tom Clancy, Michael Crichton, Leonardo DiCaprio, and Cameron Diaz. Has anything changed? In his secretive, soft-voiced manner, Ovitz walks NED ZEMAN through his high-stakes plan for (entertainment) world domination, from the 7100 chip to the Octopus Theory

Michael Ovitz is the Devil.

That's what some people tell you in Hollywood. Not everyone tells you this, since Ovitz still has many friends and fans here in, as the locals like to call it, "this town." But to Ovitz's critics and enemies, that only proves the point: they warn that the Devil never presents himself as Satan, Prince of Darkness, with the pitchfork and the bifurcated tail. This warning is usually whispered gravely over the phone or, this being Hollywood, Chinese chicken salad.

"Did you hear the joke about the scorpion and the alligator?" Hollywood's most famous talent manager, Bernie Brillstein, asks you by way of metaphor. Brillstein, whose contempt for Ovitz spans more than 20 years, has lately earned the mantle of Hollywood's most fearless and vocal Ovitz-hater. "The scorpion needs a ride across the river. The alligator gives it to him, and then the scorpion stings him and kills him. Before he dies, the alligator asks, 'Why?' The scorpion says, 'Because I'm a *scorpion.*'"

For years Ovitz's critics have pointed you to what is, by their thinking, the Devil's handbook, more commonly known as *The Art of War,* the centuries-old Chinese manifesto written by that mysterious warrior-philosopher Sun Tzu on military strategy and tactics. In the go-go 80s, when Ovitz and his vaunted talent company, Creative Artists Agency, had a stranglehold on Hollywood, *The Art of War* was the bible of the entertainment industry—thanks largely to Ovitz. He didn't just admire Sun Tzu, you are reminded and re-reminded. He was Sun Tzu, albeit better-dressed and with a smashing art collection.

And so . . . and so. Three years after abdicating as head of CAA amid a cloud of mistrust and recrimination, after his ugly, impossibly lucrative ouster from the number-two spot at Disney, after his foiled attempts to become a Broadway producer and an N.F.L.-team owner, after months of exile in the wilds of Brentwood, the former King of Hollywood, bowed but unbroken, opened a new management company, Artists Management Group. Not long thereafter, Ovitz's successors at CAA, accusing their allegedly "untrustworthy" ex-boss of poaching their agents (such as Mike Menchel) and clients (such as Robin Williams), declared that they would no longer represent anyone managed by his new company. Then, late last summer, when AMG was barely 18 months old, a mere corporate toddler, this headline appeared in *The New York Times:* AN AUTHOR SEDUCED BY HOLLYWOOD'S GLIMMER.

The article reported that Tom Clancy, the best-selling writer of *Patriot Games* and other military-friendly mega-thrillers, had dumped his longtime William Morris literary agent, Robert Gottlieb, and would henceforth be represented by Ovitz. Gottlieb, who had discovered Clancy back when Clancy was an insurance salesman peddling his unpublished manuscripts, placed the finger of blame squarely on Ovitz. Clancy, Gottlieb complained, had been "bamboozled" by Ovitz, who had "raided" the William Morris Agency, taking a client whose books had earned approximately $300 million in royalties and subsidiary rights. Despite persuasive denials by Clancy that he had been poached, the *Times* article triggered an explosion of anti-Ovitz venom, and it was the talk of the agenting-publishing [illegible]

The following week *The New York Times* revealed that [illegible] Nevins, an AMG literary agent, had tried to manipulate [illegible] *Times* best-seller list by placing bulk orders costing over $750 [illegible] for one of his clients' books at stores whose sales figures [illegible] known to be used to calculate the list. Some of the book[illegible] owners had refused to go along with the scheme, and one [illegible] "I put my finger to my nose because it stunk."

In truth, the spate of bad press had the distinct odor of [illegible] stone. The implication was clear: the Devil, once again, [illegible] alive and well and living in Los Angeles.

Michael Ovitz is not the Devil.

This is what some other people in Hol[illegible] wood—in particular, those who regard hi[illegible] a remarkable businessman and entertainm[illegible] industry visionary—tell you. This is also [illegible] Ovitz himself tells you over the course [illegible] several interviews—in his art-filled hom[illegible] his office, on the phone, in his favorite Japanese restaur[illegible] Hamasaku, tucked in a faceless strip mall just east of Sa[illegible] Monica. This is where you are right now, ensconced at a s[illegible] private corner table, inhaling *toro* which costs $8 apiece [illegible] which arrives moments after you sit, without anyone having [illegible] ibly or audibly ordered anything. Ovitz is, as usual, immacu[illegible] blue suit, blue shirt, dark tie. He is crisp. No wrinkles in s[illegible] Hair, perfect.

And you? Normally, you have no business inserting you[illegible] into the story. But this is different. Ovitz says, *I want to know [illegible] you think.* And there you are, in the story. Suddenly he's as[illegible] the questions, and you're on the spot, answering them. Ovitz [illegible] to control things. He controls the air. He always arrives after [illegible] and leaves before you. He calls when you're least expectin[illegible] After he calls, you hurriedly leaf through your dog-eared [illegible] Tzu, trolling for hidden meanings. Sometimes you find th[illegible] Sometimes not. With Ovitz, you never know. His friends tell [illegible] to take him at face value. He is who he is. "I don't feel like [illegible] ever being manipulated, because he is very up-front about w[illegible] he's doing," says the prolific and demanding producer S[illegible] Rudin (*The Firm, Clueless, Wonder Boys*). "And it just h[illegible] good to me. . . . I've always enjoyed dealing with him becaus[illegible] gets it done. And getting it done is a monster accomplishmen[illegible]

At the restaurant Ovitz says, leaning close, in his famously [illegible] Mike Ovitz Voice, "I am going to be very direct about so[illegible] thing." He nods toward his deputy and corporate spokesm[illegible] Mike Burns, a savvy, less intense man who sits in on mos[illegible] your interviews with the AMG brass. Burns smiles as Ovitz s[illegible] "He is going to get upset with me for saying this. The rea[illegible] that stimulated me to agree to do this article, after meeting w[illegible] was that I want to set the record straight about myself. E[illegible] time someone comes to my house for dinner, they walk a[illegible] with a different feeling about me. Every time someone come[illegible] buy art with me or anything intellectual, they come away wi[illegible] different point of view. I've been doing this since I'm 17. I m[illegible] it on my own. I'm on the board of the Museum of Modern [illegible] I'm building a hospital here. And I built a business that beat[illegible] crap out of everybody. That's what business is, and everyone [illegible] es sight of that. And that has dogged me for the last five yea[illegible]

He adds, "Anyone that has ever taken a risk has gotten a[illegible] reward. But you get a lot of baggage with it. And my bag[illegible] has been that some people basically hate me."

tting the record straight. This is Ovitz's mantra, and he means about himself and about his new company. It is why he's ed you here and gorged you with a never-ending supply of iously expensive raw fish. "This is $8 apiece," he says as you . He winks, adding, "I get it for *four*." Later, grinning, he "I had them bring you the expensive *toro* to show you that a good guy, no matter what happens with this article. Be- you won't be buying *that toro* on *your* expense account."

s, Ovitz says, Sun Tzu was the bible during his 20-year reign AA, which Ovitz, along with co-founders Ron Meyer and Bill r, built from scratch after Ovitz had grown weary of toiling e then ossifying William Morris Agency. "That was 1974," explains. "This is 2001. This is a different mind-set, a differ- me frame, with different people. The consolidation of power much different in '74. The companies are much larger today. 're all public. It's a different strategy, which is why I'm doing . *The Art of War* is not relevant to what I do now. This is no one can figure out. All reporters . . . " Ovitz pauses, sing his words carefully. He the way the media have por- d him. *Hates it.* He says, tedly, "A lot of the articles that written are by lazy people."

e continues, "I'm interested in 's new. I'm interested in change. interested in a different game e. *The Art of War,* for '74, was me plan. *The Art of War* in is a good book."

> "By swinging for the fences, churning it out fast and furious, they're setting themselves up to take a huge fall."

Today, at 54, Michael Ovitz—dare we say the New Michael Ovitz—is all about that buzzword for the new millennium: synergy. He is and G is. You hear this often. To "When I was in my 30s and the goal was to be king. But you get older. You learn that ess important. There are other things that you can do with position. I will never be in the position that I was in when I an agent. . . . I don't *want* to be in that position. I *couldn't* be at position. And somebody 20 years younger than me should that position. . . . I've had it, and I don't want to be in the er of the hurricane. I want to be *creating* the hurricane."

e gives you a searching look. "Does that make any sense to "

hat's the million-dollar question—or, given all the cash that z himself may ultimately pump into his new company, the) million question. Then again, if there's just one question that yone in Hollywood has been asking about Ovitz's spacious es in Beverly Hills, it's this: What the hell's going on up there? I'm not intimately aware of what his business plan is," says Rabineau, a partner at the ascendant Endeavor Talent Agency. t he's a formidable competitor, and I wouldn't bet against him." Sometimes there seemed to be no plan at all," says a source witnessed the company's first months. "Just throw it nst the wall and hope it sticks."

top Hollywood executive is more specific: "You're watching the plan, which is: the company's all supposed to look good and then somebody will buy it."

But if you talk with Ovitz, that seems wrong. He says he absolutely, categorically has a plan for AMG, and a big one, involving microchips and Pamela Anderson's rafting gear and a day when the entire entertainment universe will be at your fingertips. Spend five minutes with the man and you realize that he's in this for the long haul, and that AMG is, perhaps, his last Big Gamble. The stakes for him have never been higher. If Ovitz succeeds—a big if—he might once again be Master of the Universe, a bona fide Hollywood visionary who will be remembered as the Lew Wasserman of Hollywood's Digital Age. If he loses, however, he won't simply have burned up millions of his personal fortune. He stands to be remembered in tragic, almost Shakespearean terms. He himself says it a million times in a million different ways: "Three years from today, someone will write another article about whether this worked or not," he says, staring at your tape recorder. "It's either going to pay off or it's not."

When you ask him if that keeps him awake at night, he winks at you and, in classic Ovitz form, says, "What good does that do me?"

Artists Management Group's headquarters can be found at the corner of Wilshire and Beverly, in the busy high-rent corridor where the Big Five talent agencies—CAA, ICM, William Morris, Endeavor, and UTA—plus the city's most entrenched management company, Brillstein-Grey Entertainment, are located. (The New York staff works on West 57th Street.) AMG occupies two and a half floors of the Bank of America Building, which also houses Ron Howard and Brian Grazer's Imagine Entertainment and Garth Brooks's film-production company. Ovitz, who famously owns one of the more expensive and expansive art collections in Los Angeles, has decorated AMG's offices with classic black-and-white photographs by Muybridge, Arbus, and Avedon, among others. The place has a mahogany-ish, unmistakably male atmosphere—I. M. Pei meets the Downtown Athletic Club.

Every Monday morning at 9:30, AMG's senior staff meets in a large conference room and goes over the week's business. On one particular Monday, you find yourself standing in a corner of the room, near the far end of a titanic marble conference table. Ovitz sits at the other end, flanked by Rick and Julie Yorn, who are siblings-in-law. Rick, 32, is officially Ovitz's partner in this venture; Julie, 35, is a partner who is less management, more manager. Although virtually all the men in the room, including Ovitz, wear dark suits and ties, the famously tousled Rick Yorn has on a rumpled sweater that has seen better decades.

There is no throat clearing, no pencil tapping. When Ovitz is ready to begin, he simply lays his palms on the table, and the room goes quiet. After some formalities—and an inside joke in-

[illegible] beverage called Red Bull, cans of which are distributed to everyone. Ovitz surveys the heads of each of the company's [illegible]mbiotic departments: talent, film production, TV production, literary properties, music, animation, and sports. The last, which represents Pete Sampras and N.B.A. star Lamar Odom, is a particular darling of Ovitz's, an inveterate sports fan who gleefully calls its department head, Jeff Schwartz, "Schvantz," which is Yiddish for "penis." Each department head reports new deals (Samuel L. Jackson hosting the ESPY Awards!) and new clients (*Murphy Brown* producer Diane English!). There are kudos all around, and encouraging words, and, truth be told, it seems more like an infomercial than an actual meeting. Secretly, deep down, you find yourself hoping that one of the staffers will sink into his chair and blurt, "We can't compete with the big boys, dammit!—I'm going back to ICM!" and burst into tears. But no.

Toward the end of the meeting, though, something interesting happens. Ovitz leans forward, eyeballs his charges, and, rather sternly, gives them their marching orders, the specifics of which are incidental. What's important is what Ovitz calls his "tone," which falls somewhere between paternal and presidential. Only now does it become clear that this company is still a baby, barely two years old, populated by a crack but novice staff culled from other agencies and management firms. Use each other, Ovitz says. Move in teams. Scratch one another's backs. Synergy, synergy, synergy. As synergy goes, he seems to suggest, so goes AMG. Unlike the major talent agencies, whose fates are directly linked to market share—to the winner go the spoils—management companies work with smaller, more finite client bases. That way, goes the reasoning, clients receive more hands-on attention. This leaves less room for error, fiscally speaking, but also creates a number of opportunities.

Which brings us to the Octopus Theory, credit for which goes to Cathy Schulman, an energetic 35-year-old who runs the day-to-day operations of Artists Production Group (APG), the film division. "I'm an Alpha Employee," says Schulman, who has been with Ovitz and Yorn right from the get-go, after successful stints working with Robert Redford at the Sundance Film Festival and with Tom Rothman, then president of production at Samuel Goldwyn. "I sat in Michael's living room and he said, 'I want to have a content company for the new millennium!' And I sort of listened to him and said, 'What is that, exactly?' . . . He said, 'I envision a company where we can be involved in all areas—buying, selling, producing, promoting. Everything you need to do to make movies happen. And get ourselves in a place where the movies can happen, the television shows can happen, and the Internet and all the other opportunities can happen.'"

So, Schulman explains, "at the head of the octopus we have this incredibly carefully selected, tightly maintained talent group. . . . And we take that talent motor—the head of the octopus—and it, really, is motoring a number of content companies. A TV company. A movie company. Sports. Music. Animation. . . . We are all interrelated, and it's motored by that group at the top." As in: AMG's sports department represents Los Angeles Laker Rick Fox, who might appear in an Artists Television Group (ATG) television show, and perhaps in an APG film as well.

In Hollywood your leverage depends solely on the talent, so it has to be A-list. Enter the Yorns, who, prior to joining AMG, were two of the most promising managers in town, having [illegible]ralled such rising stars as Leonardo DiCaprio, Cameron D[illegible] and Samuel L. Jackson while working at a smaller managem[illegible] firm, Addis-Wechsler, now part of IPG. (This being a Mic[illegible] Ovitz Situation, their decision to bolt for AMG two years ago [illegible] not transpire without the requisite amount of rancor and [illegible] trigue.) Without the Yorns' hot young clients, it could be arg[illegible] Ovitz would have no AMG. That's what many of the Yorns' [illegible] quaintances told them at the time. "No one wanted me to [illegible] this," Rick Yorn says, laughing. "I think they warned me, b[illegible] just didn't—I guess I wasn't prepared." He's referring to the [illegible] slaught of publicity, mostly negative, about the electric partners[illegible] "I had no idea of the level it would reach. . . . Unlike Micha[illegible] don't really care what anyone writes or anyone else thinks." [illegible] smiles a Cheshire-cat smile. "I feel like it's gotten better, press-w[illegible] I think it definitely has. We've sort of nipped it a little bit. [illegible] just the reality of the first six months—if someone would h[illegible] said that was going to be that bad, I'd have said, 'No way.'"

Ovitz's and Rick Yorn's demeanors are, as if by design, alm[illegible] freakishly divergent. If the duo didn't exist already, a sitcom t[illegible] would have invented them: the staid executive with his old-sch[illegible] clients (Clancy, Michael Crichton, directors Sydney Pollack [illegible] Martin Scorsese) and the happenin' young buck with his st[illegible] of hotties (Leo, Cameron, Ed Burns, Heather Graham). [illegible] apotheosis of synergy! "I think that a lot of their managem[illegible] styles differ based on generational differences," says Stepha[illegible] Davis, 35, who works in the company's film department. "R[illegible] is very of-the-moment. He's got a sort of streetwise, very [illegible] very, very likable thing." She smiles. "I think it's just a venee[illegible] Rick. Rick has a way of seeming like he is doing everything [illegible] the cuff, and I would suggest that that's not really the case."

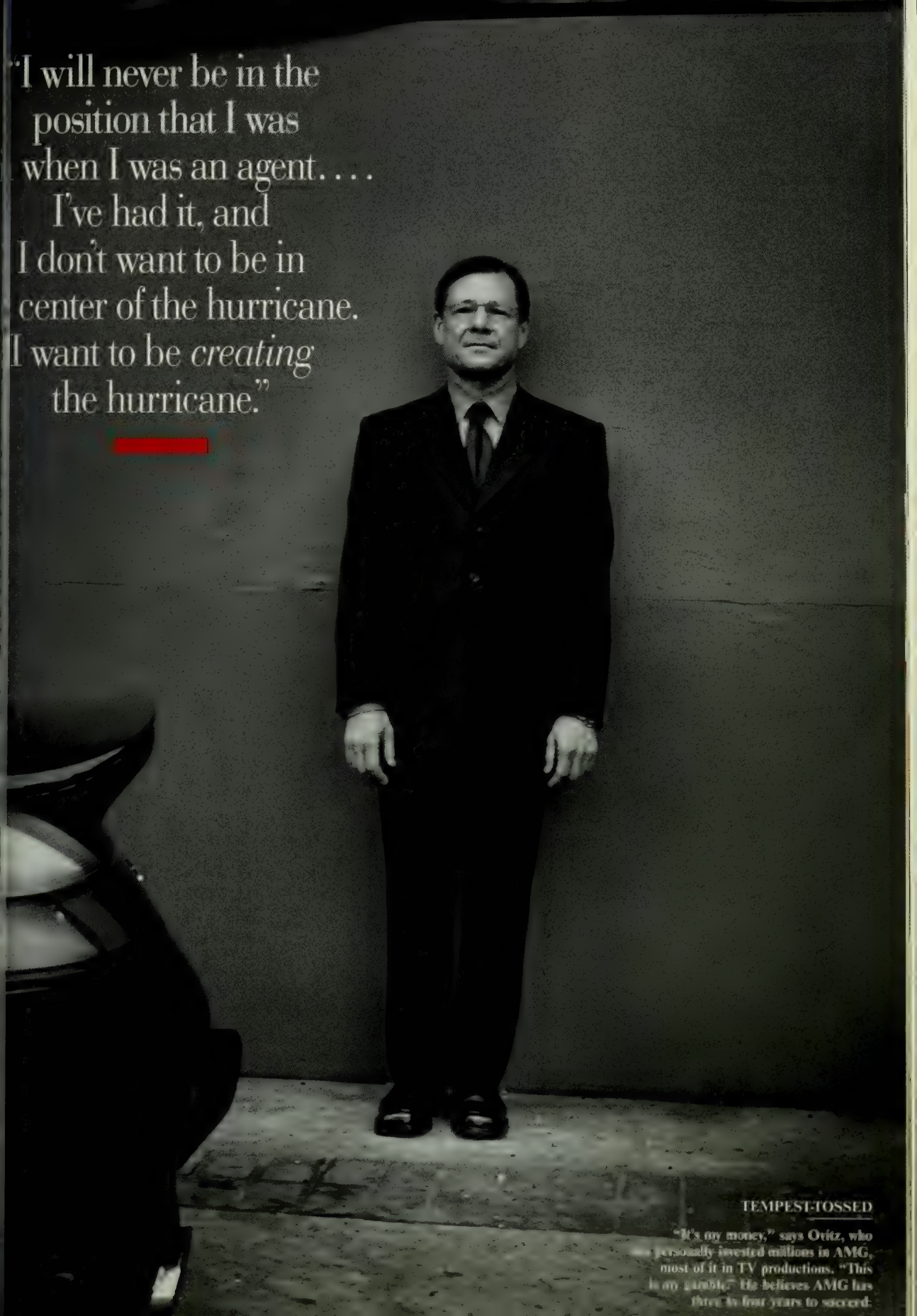
Asked to contrast and compare, Yorn, who's not nearly [illegible] press savvy as Ovitz, looks you in the eye. "You know," he s[illegible] and laughs. "*You know.*"

In the early days of AMG, when the offices were still filled w[illegible] crates, Ovitz would pace the halls in a sleek Armani suit, look[illegible] like a corporate astronaut, thanks to an endless cord which t[illegible] ered him to his phone. (Ovitz is aware that people find the c[illegible] funny, but he doesn't care.) Yorn, by contrast, would sometim[illegible] slouch in, drowsy and unshaven, wearing a rumpled sweatshirt, [illegible] ter a long night of client courting, which he does as well as any[illegible] in Hollywood. "Bad one last night," he'd say, grinning. Little [illegible] changed since then. "Today," Ovitz says incredulously, "Rick [illegible] an outfit on that *defied imagination.*" Yorn had been wooing a [illegible] shot musician who may or may not be joining AMG. Musi[illegible] Yorn's first love—the company represents acts as different as M[illegible] sy Elliott, Blues Traveler, Liz Phair, and LL Cool J—and O[illegible] defers on such matters. After all, his tastes veer toward Bach.

"To be absolutely honest with you," says Syd[illegible] Pollack (*Tootsie, The Firm*), "I can't *explain* wha[illegible] manager does. I've dealt with a lot of them, a[illegible] I've never really understood all of these pe[illegible] having both agents and managers. Seems to [illegible] it's redundant. But I accept the fact that beca[illegible] so many people do have both that there [illegible] separate responsibilities. I suppose there's something a li[illegible] more personal in the manager function."

Like virtually everyone else in the world, Pollack appreci[illegible] that the whole agent/manager delineation is as picayune as i[illegible] tedious. And yet the distinction lies at CONTINUED ON PAGE

"I will never be in the position that I was when I was an agent.... I've had it, and I don't want to be in center of the hurricane. I want to be *creating* the hurricane."



TEMPEST-TOSSED

"It's my money," says Ortiz, who has personally invested millions in AMG, most of it in TV productions. "This is my gamble." He believes AMG has three to four years to succeed.



THE KILLING GAME

When *Rollerball* was released in 1975, it offered a chilling vision of a future in which multinational corporations rule the world, diverting the masses by sponsoring a mindlessly contrived, ultra-violent sport—the Davos version of Roman circuses. Twenty-six years later, in an age that has given us News Corp.'s ownership of sports properties on five continents and G.E.'s half-stake in the mindlessly contrived, ultra-violent X.F.L., *Rollerball* may well be ripe for freshening up. That's what director John McTiernan (*Die Hard, The Hunt for Red October*) is banking on. his remake of the old James Caan vehicle will b out this August. The film only looks as if it takes place in a Thir Reich gone gaga for Roller Derby; it is actually set "five minute in the future" in a nameless post-Soviet country. The stars ar Chris Klein, showing a butch-er side after *American Pie* an *Election;* LL Cool J, making the easier transition from Olive Stone's football movie, *Any Given Sunday;* and the model Re becca Romijn-Stamos. One request: If they're going to remak James Caan vehicles, why not *Slither?* —BRUCE HAND

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN HUBA



ROLL ON

LL Cool J as Marcus Ridley, the team leader, and Jean Reno (*opposite*) as Petrovich, the ruthless team owner, photographed on the set of *Rollerball* in Blainville, Québec on November 6, 2000.



Swinging into

After Twentieth Century Fox executives David Brown and Richard Zan paid a then staggering $900,000 for the rights to Gore Vidal's shocking *Myra Breckinridge* in 1968, they feared t gender-bending best-seller would turn out to be unfilmable. Enter 29-year- Michael Sarne, Swinging London's hottest neophyte director, who soon foun himself at the center of a much-publicized creative free-for-all, with an uncontrollable cast featuring Raquel Welch, John Huston, Mae West, and Rex Reed. STEVEN DALY recalls the spectacular celluloid disaster that shook a studio dynasty and left Sarne a Hollywood pariah



Disaster

A MOON FOR THE MISBEGOTTEN

Opposite, Mae West, appearing in her first film in 27 years, as lusty agent Letitia Van Allen. *This page,* Raquel Welch's Myra gives young stud Rusty (played by Roger Herren) a glowing review.

So there he is: Mike Sarne, actor turned pop star turned photographer turned movie director, tooling down West London's Chiswick High Road in his silver mid-50s Thunderbird. It's some roadster, this Thunderbird: Sarne has had it up to 140 miles per hour out on the motorway, and he's even managed to flip the thing over, thanks to its simply rotten suspension.

The year is 1968. London is in its Late Swinging period, and few are oscillating more wildly than Mike Sarne, the street-smart son of Czechoslovak immigrants who fled the Nazis, and a known Face in all the Ace Places. Sarne (né Scheuer) has had a No. 1 smash in 1962 with "Come Outside," a jaunty novelty song in which he woos, in fake Cockney accent, a lower-class dolly bird. As a self-taught photographer, he has snapped Twiggy, Marianne Faithfull, Celia Hammond, "Patti Boyd and the whole gang." As a self-taught director, he has helmed *Joanna,* a quintessentially Swinging film about a middle-class dolly bird. Twentieth Century Fox, which is distributing the film, is pleased with its reception, and according to Sarne's agent at William Morris, everybody wants a piece of Swinging Mike.

So Mike Sarne is hot, and he knows it—dig?

On this particular day, Sarne is returning from London's ultra-swank Claridge's hotel, where he's had a meeting with this character named Robert Fryer, a Fox-affiliated movie producer with a heavy pedigree in Broadway musicals. Fryer has been deputized to ask Swinging Mike if he is interested in directing a project that will surely send his profile stratospheric: the film adaptation of *Myra Breckinridge,* the outrageous best-selling novel by Fryer's friend Gore Vidal.

So Sarne gives ear to Fryer's *Breckinridge* pitch and takes a copy of Vidal's book. The young director pilots the old Thunderbird back to West London, and parks near his Chiswick house (where, not incidentally, Sarne has bedded no less a 60s sexpot than Brigitte Bardot).

"As I put the key in the lock," says Sarne today, "the book opened in the middle at this well-thumbed page, where this sodomy scene is going on. And I'm reading about this dildo going into the backside of some young guy. And I'm thinking: Are they serious, the William Morris Agency, Twentieth Century Fox, this funny, fey little producer?"

As far as directing this thing went—forget it. "I chucked it," says Sarne. "I don't know what happened to that copy of the book. And I forgot about it."

But only for a while. When he did ultimately succumb to *Myra Breckinridge*'s abundant charms, Mike Sarne would end up making a celluloid disasterpiece that is to this day pilloried as one of the worst films ever made. *Myra Breckinridge* managed to offend in equal measure the literary world, *ancien régime* Hollywood, and demimonde hipsters—and although its $4-million-plus budget was merely average for the time, the film also destabilized one of the great movie dynasties.

All these years later, most of the parties involved have filed this vilified project somewhere in the darker recesses of their minds—yet for Mike Sarne the memory will never fade. It was an experience that branded him, at 31, a Hollywood pariah with no chance of redemption.

"I'm the innocent party in this whole story," Sarne now protests. "I mean, probably don't believe me, but I a innocent party in this whole debacl

How do you s problem like This, in the of 1968, w question f Twentieth C Fox, and in ular company executives David Brow Richard Zanuck. Fox had triumphed bidding war for Gore Vidal's novel, a vertiginous $900,000 for movie ri a book that had scandalized the and soared to the top of best-seller February of that year. A book that w subject of such pre-release notoriet publisher Little, Brown opted to p no review copies to the press.

The public ate *Myra Breckinrid* although the book was, in best- terms, a rare beast—not to men seemingly unlikely candidate to be by movie adaptation. Vidal's ph magorical satire revolves around a character bent on reforming the n uptight attitude toward sex through woman jihad against the modern A can male; a character who goes Myron to Myra with the flick of geon's knife, then lights out for Holly to claim a family inheri-



"You could totally believe that Raquel was a sex change in a mad sort of way."



THAT'S GENDERTAINMENT!

From far left: Fox executives Richard Zanuck, David Brown, and Darryl Zanuck in Los Angeles, 1968; Gore Vidal in front of a statue that appeared on the cover of his novel and provided inspiration for Myra's look in the film; Welch as Myra; Brigitte Bardot and Mike Sarne in London, 1966—three years before *Myra Breckinridge* would wipe that grin off his face.



Reed depicted a movie set taken to the brink of chaos by an amateurish direct and by Welch's wounded-anim skittishnes

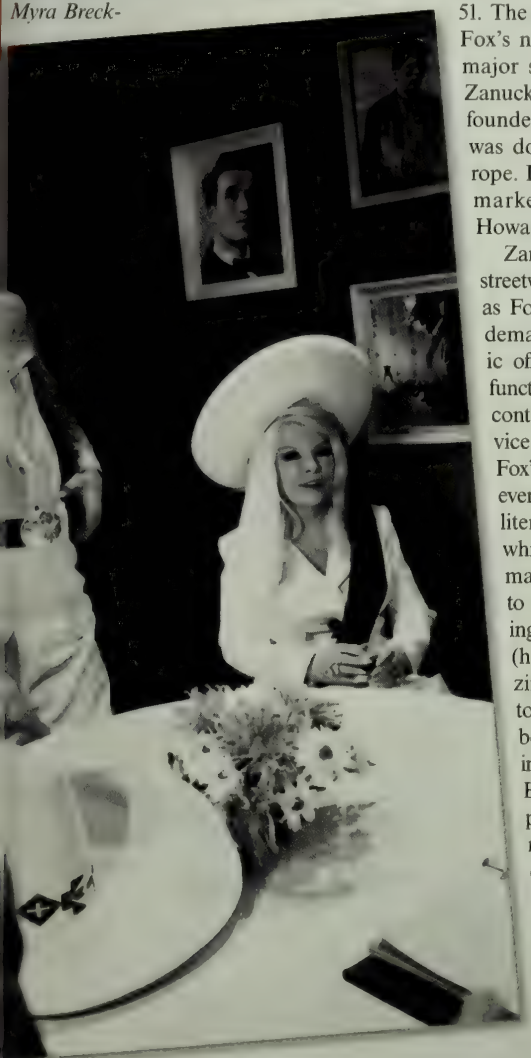


"WHERE ARE MY TITS?!"

Rex Reed as Myron with Welch at the Chateau Marmont, where much of the film was shot. *Opposite:* John Huston, as Uncle Buck Loner, and Mae West, who said of Welch, "She's a sweet little thing, but no real woman would play this part."

from a retired cowboy actor; a char-
lit should be noted, whose secon-
mission is to violate the lovingly
ped buttocks of an insolent young
named Rusty. Throughout the book
a film classicist who is obsessed
Hollywood's 1935–45 Golden Age,
forth a riotously entertaining inter-
onologue that lauds the obscure,
e movie intellectual Parker Tyler
elegantly skewering the sloppy
ilities of modern youth. Everything
the younger generation and its pop-
ulture makes Myra sick: from its
awed locutions to its slovenly dress
maddening inability to appreciate
olific oeuvre of producer Pandro S.
n.

book-buying American public had
8 been primed by Harold Robbins's
led works, and lathered by Jacque-
sann's pill-popping sex maniacs and
riapic partners—but *Myra Breckin-*
idministered strokes of quite a dif-
and altogether more literary sort.
the English critic John Weightman
Myra Breck-



inridge "a queer, queer book," he was not referring to the title character's rampant expression of what we might now call "the gay sensibility," a sensibility that today is associated with impressive spending power. *Myra Breckinridge*'s large constituency was certifiably mainstream: a mass audience looking for its kink quotient in any available form, even if it came packaged with lengthy ruminations on the parlous state of straight American manhood and the finer points of James Craig's performance in *Marriage Is a Private Affair.*

Best-sellers had always been prime movie fodder, and if this was an unusual novel, the late 60s were an era where few of the old certainties applied, a period in which the studios were desperate to figure out a youth market that was making hits of such iconoclastic statements as *Bonnie and Clyde* and *The Graduate.* In March 1968, when the rights to make *Myra Breckinridge* were won by Twentieth Century Fox, that company was being guided by the odd-couple power duo of Richard Zanuck, 33, and David Brown, 51. The former was the son of Fox's nominal president and major shareholder, Darryl F. Zanuck, one of the company's founders, who by the late 60s was domiciled chiefly in Europe. It was, Richard once remarked, like "working for Howard Hughes."

Zanuck *fils* was a stocky, streetwise former athlete who, as Fox's head of production, demanded that his cinematic offspring be above all else functional and populist. By contrast, David Brown, the vice president in charge of Fox's story department, was every inch the East Coast literary gent, dapper, bewhiskered, and refined of manner. Brown had risen to the position of managing editor at *Cosmopolitan* (he'd later wed the magazine's most famous editor, Helen Gurley Brown) before being tempted west in 1951 by Darryl Zanuck. But for a brief return to publishing, Brown remained with Fox for two decades thereafter, developing the network of literary contacts that earned him a reputation for being "the best nose in the business" when it came to raw material for the movies.

In August 1969, Richard Zanuck staged a dramatic coup at Fox, installing himself as president and reducing his father to chairman. Darryl Zanuck told his son that he had perpetrated "the con job of the century," yet the younger Zanuck felt that this hubristic move was a necessary step toward the financial rationalization that a management consultant's report had prescribed for the company. Ever since 1963, when *Cleopatra* and its record-busting budget had nearly bankrupted the company, Fox had been a troubled operation. The huge success of 1965's *The Sound of Music* had kept the studio afloat, but it had followed that picture with an expensive string of famous flops: *Star!; Doctor Dolittle; Hello, Dolly!*

The days of Hollywood's studio system may have been long gone by 1969, but the new regime of Zanuck and Brown inherited what the latter calls a "benevolent dictatorship" at Twentieth Century Fox. "We didn't bet the studio on every picture we made," says Brown. "In those days," he notes, "Hollywood was fun. It wasn't stressed out." Yet, if he and Richard Zanuck were not exactly betting the studio on *Myra Breckinridge,* the stakes were still substantial. (By way of comparison to the $900,000 Fox paid for Vidal's novel, the studio had bought *Valley of the Dolls,* Jackie Susann's eminently filmable 1966 blockbuster, for just $200,000.) Thus the challenge of translating *Myra Breckinridge* to the big screen looked likely to get Brown and Zanuck as close to "stressed out" as anything they'd handled in all their years together at Fox. The outcome would certainly affect the reputations of Brown and Zanuck, within the film industry in general and with Zanuck's disgruntled father in particular. It was imperative that Fox find a writer who could make cinematic sense of the Vidal book while keeping its more salacious passages within Hollywood's standards of moral decency. And, of course, deliver box-office dynamite in the process.

Gore Vidal's contract with Fox gave him first crack at writing the screenplay, and attached him to the project as a co-producer. Vidal was not new to the screenwriting dodge: as a long-term-contract writer for MGM, he had made an uncredited but significant contribution to *Ben-Hur,* the 1959 blockbuster that won a still-record 11 Oscars. *Myra Breckinridge* may have presented a more complex challenge, but Vidal (who

"Do you think we're working on a dirty movie?"
"Yeah, I think we are."



"THEY ONLY BO
IT FOR THE DILDO S

Clockwise from top left: Welch and
getting ready for their big moment; Myra
skeptics what's become of Myron; Sarne
as Huston's Uncle Buck gets a workin
Reed takes a break; crowds (believe it or not
Myra Breckinridge's New York premiere in Jun
Myra hoping to seduce Mary-Ann
by then-ingenue Farrah Fawcett); Sarne,
wishing he were back in London shagging do
with David Bailey; director and warring
give their all for a publici


BOND
CRITERION
MAE WEST JOHN HUSTON
RAQUEL WELCH
MYRA BRECKINRIDGE

responded to questions in writing) maintains that in crafting the script he was able to "get around the most censorable parts," and as far as the ticklish task of finding a suitable director went, he claims, "Bud Yorkin [*Divorce American Style*] and I discussed the possibility of his directing the movie before it was bought by Fox." Vidal was subsequently disappointed that the studio executives "started to drag their feet" on the matter. According to Hugh Fordin, then an executive at Fox, the company offered the picture to several of its favorite "old-fashioned" directors, none of whom was able to understand the original material.

The studio also rejected successive drafts of Vidal's script. "What Gore turned out was a totally different screenplay—it had nothing to do with the book," says Hugh Fordin. "I'll never forget it: I walked into David Brown's office and said, 'What's that expression on your face?' He said, 'I just read a screenplay to a totally different movie! Gore didn't use a thing of it!'" Vidal denies outright this accusation.

"I thought it was good," says Zanuck in defense of Vidal's final script. "But it lacked that touch of craziness and zaniness that his very idea evoked. It wasn't quite on the page. You just can't make a film in the ordinary sense, using a beginning, middle, and end in narrative terms. It had to be told in as outrageous and bizarre a way as the book itself."

Enter once more Mike Sarne, 29-year-old former pop star, flaxen-haired charmer, and all-around main-chance artist. Just six years earlier, Sarne had been a blond and somewhat suave student of Russian at London University, supplementing his meager grant with bits of acting, modeling, and singing, when he scored his fluke hit single. He subsequently took up photography and, once established in that field, tried his hand at shooting movies. A short film he directed drew the attention of Fox, which, eager to tap into the energy of the British scene, agreed to finance his first feature, *Joanna.* According to Sarne, it was during a street-corner meeting in London that Richard Zanuck himself gave Sarne the green light to spend a chunk of the studio's impressive *Sound of Music* profits. *Joanna* was a modestly budgeted and manageably hip soufflé of a film that drew some decent notices and performed respectably enough when it was released in 1968. This may all sound larky and serendipitous, but the way Sarne tells it, the whole of Swinging London was just one big low-hanging fruit for a likely lad such as himself, with credentials, connections, and looks.

Toward the end of 1968, Sarne found himself in a New York hotel as the guest of a producer friend who wanted him to direct a less than appealing picture. Sarne, who says he was without local currency, had been reading in the trades about Fox's rejections of Vidal's costly scripts—perhaps, he thought, having warmed somewhat to the novel's humor, he could help the studio out. And so, even though several months earlier he had failed to follow up on Robert Fryer's initial approach about directing the film, the cashless Sarne set out to walk across town to see David Brown in Fox's West Side offices. The Englishman was in good odor with Fox, thanks to *Joanna*'s success. So just like that, Mike Sarne pitched up at Brown's doorstep and announced himself to the receptionist. "Oh, Mr. Sarney, yes," she said. "I'll see if he's available." Remarkably enough, the Anglo arriviste had to wait just a few minutes for an audience with Richard Zanuck's right-hand man. Sarne brought up *Myra Breckinridge,* and, he says, Brown responded, "It's driving me crazy. Dickie doesn't want to do it, he wishes he hadn't touched the fucking thing. What a piece of shit. I wish I hadn't talked him into it."

The feckless emissary of Swinging London sat down and offered Brown his simple and elegant solution to the problem called *Myra Breckinridge.* Here's how to frame the narrative, said Sarne: Myron wakes up at the end in a hospital bed having imagined the whole thing. In other words, the oldest wrinkle in the book: "It was all a dream." (Sarne today laughs at the simplicity of the idea: "Yup—just like *Dallas.*") David Brown cottoned to this new director in a big way. "Sarne was funky and seemed to fit the material," he offers. (Brown, like Richard Zanuck, insists that his recollections regarding *Myra Breckinridge* are somewhat hazy.)

Sarne now claims he wasn't looking for money from Brown, much less a directing job—he just wanted to help. "I'm an ideas person," says Sarne with a shrug. His dream conceit went over big. Brown loved it. Instant hit. The "outrageous and bizarre" idea, perh that Zanuck felt Vidal's screenplay lac

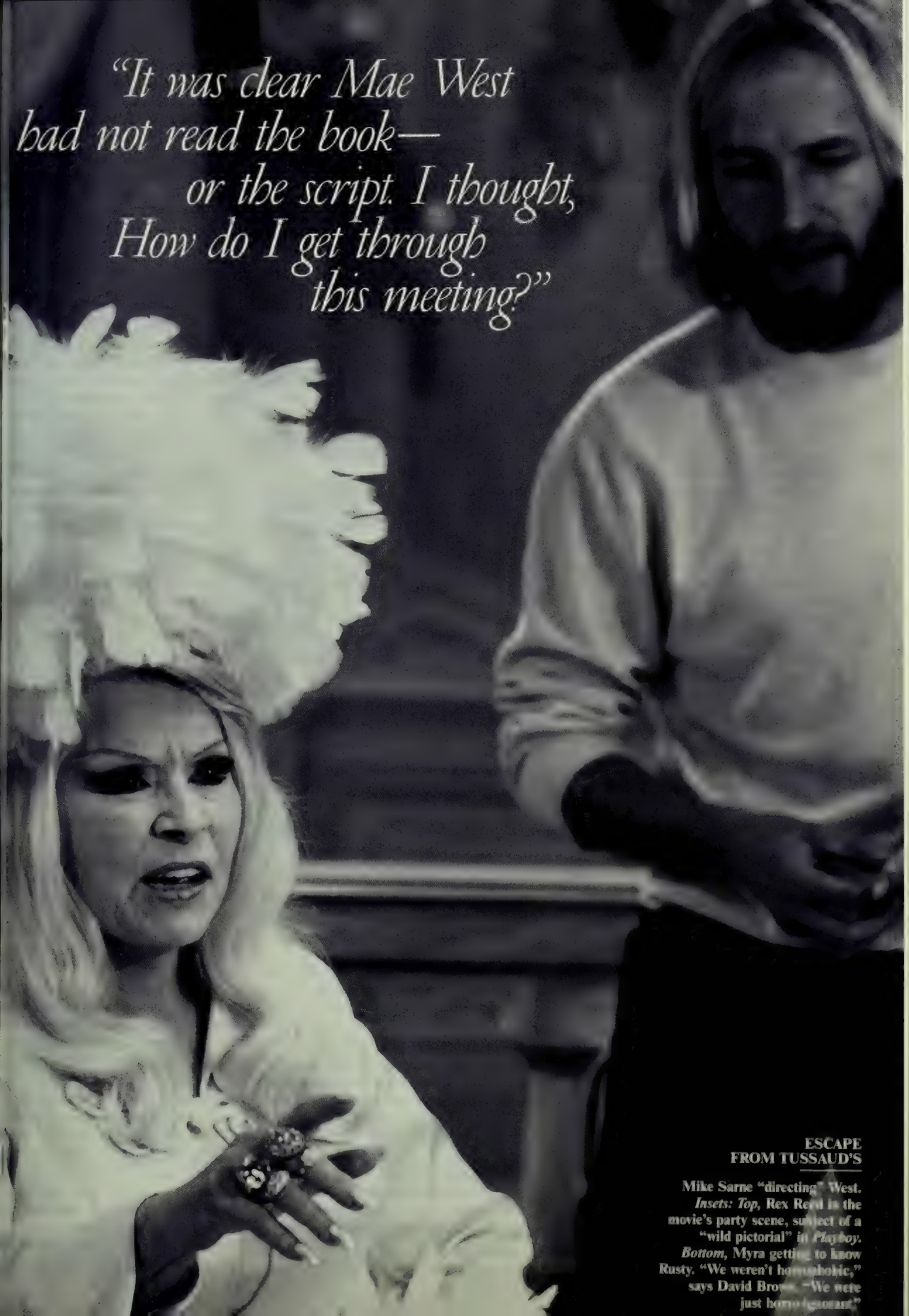
Right away David Brown got on phone to Richard Zanuck in L.A. "I I've got Mike Sarne in front of Brown explained Sarne's pitch to Za while eyeing his guest. "So," says S "he says to me, 'I want you to fly o the coast. Let's go.'" Sarne may have somewhat blithe about the prospect. Fox, he soon realized, was deadly ser Brown promptly bundled the director a jet for L.A. to meet with Zanuck.

"And now, a flashback," says Sarn did a film once [acting] with Brigitte dot. It was called *Two Weeks in Septe* We became quite close on it. And said to me, 'Don't go to Hollywood cause they eat people like you and for breakfast every day.'

"So Zanuck says to me, 'This so cool, Mike—are you going to direct picture for us?' I'm hearing Brigitte s in my head, 'They'll eat us for breakf



"It was clear Mae West had not read the book— or the script. I thought, How do I get through this meeting?"



ESCAPE FROM TUSSAUD'S

Mike Sarne "directing" West. *Insets: Top,* Rex Reed is the movie's party scene, subject of a "wild pictorial" in *Playboy*. *Bottom,* Myra getting to know Rusty. "We weren't homophobic," says David Brown. "We were just homoignorant."

... And I say, 'No, no, no, I'm just going to write the script.... I'll do it back in London.'"

Zanuck interjected: "We could get you a place in the Hills, Brentwood ..." There was talk of an office, a secretary—$1,000 a week in expenses. "That's when a thousand dollars was a thousand dollars," says Sarne, who nonetheless insisted that London was where he wanted to get married and buy a home, where he wanted to be close to his aging father.

But Richard Zanuck hadn't gotten where he was by deferring to the talent, no matter how "swinging." So he dangled before Sarne the kind of numbers that looked to European eyes as big as the HOLLYWOOD sign: $75,000 to write, with $25,000 for revisions. "Seventy-five grand," Sarne marvels. "Now they're weakening me; my knees are beginning to buckle, O.K.?"

In one last attempt to leave open an escape route, Sarne suggested that there should be a "mutual option" in his contract that would allow Fox to go with another director should it so choose, and, more important to Sarne, that he should have the option to pass on directing *Myra Breckinridge* should he so choose.

"So Dick Zanuck says the most fateful words I've ever heard in my life," says Sarne. "He leans forward over his desk. He says, 'Mike, a mutual option is no option.' And as he said that, I could see the 75 grand disappearing down the tubes."

So, almost as casually as Sarne had walked in to see David Brown, he signed on as *Myra*'s savior with the full blessing of both Zanuck and Brown. It is fair to say that by the time the movie was unveiled for America's cinema-going masses a year and a half later all three men—and, in fact, just about everyone associated with the film—wished that they had never attempted to coax Gore Vidal's lithe volume forth from the realm of print.

If Mike Sarne was in, Gore Vidal was out. The creator of *Myra Breckinridge* resigned his co-producer role as soon as Fox hired Sarne. Vidal remembers being shown *Joanna* by David Brown and Richard Zanuck after they acquired the rights to his novel. "It was very bad. British. A flop," Vidal says. He recalls being told later that "a pop singer called Michael Sarne would write and direct *Myra,* presumably on the strength of *Joanna.*" Sarne himself was perfectly aware of Vidal's contempt for his work; he well remembers the author's comment that *Joanna* was "forty commercials looking for a product."

"My last act as co-producer," says Vidal (who would nevertheless stay in contact with the producer Robert Fryer as a backstage kibitzer throughout the coming months), "was to tell Dick 'n' Dave [Zanuck and Brown] that Sarne, no more a writer than a director, could never handle so complex a job. But a force higher than D&D was guiding them to the poor house."

At a meeting with Dick 'n' Dave and Fryer at New York's St. Regis hotel, Vidal offered a prediction: "This time next year Fox will be in the hands of the receivers," he said. In Brown's breezy and engaging autobiography, *Let Me Entertain You,* he recounts Vidal's exit after this summary judgment. "As he went out of the room," writes Brown (who puts the meeting at the Plaza), "he stumbled over Fryer, who was lying in the hallway, quietly sobbing. Or was he laughing?"

These days, Mike Sarne resembles a slightly downscale version of Beatles producer George Martin, minus the regimental diction and clad in brown brogues and a blue blazer that have definitely seen better days. The heavy lines around Sarne's blue eyes reveal that he has clearly flinched at the untold blows that have assailed him, yet his face has been etched by wisdom rather than bitterness about what befell him in Hollywood. He is a maddeningly discursive and endlessly entertaining raconteur who delights in every absurd curveball life has thrown at him, whether it be romps with Bardot, novelty-song stardom, or million-dollar meetings in London squares. But even Sarne's well-honed sense of absurdity was stretched by *Myra Breckinridge,* the project Zanuck gave him as a "reward" for *Joanna.*

Sarne arrived in Los Angeles to begin writing on January 15, 1969, bringing with him Tanya, his wife of just one day, a schoolteacher and former go-go dancer. "Funky" Mike was putatively in Hollywood to help Fox embrace the youth revolution that had stood the film business on its head. He, however, had entered the film business not to destroy Western capitalism or nuke cinematic convention, but to simply rid himself of "the smell of poverty" he remembered from his childhood.

"I'm thinking I'll write the script and get the fuck out of here," says Sarne. Come the spring of 1969 he was beginning to understand the odd nation he had been hired to satirize, and to figure out a way to harness this troublesome mistress named Myra. His initial work was done in Room 64 of the storied Chateau Marmont hotel on Sunset Boulevard, where parts of the film would, per Vidal's novel, be filmed—and where the smell of poverty rarely rises above the sweet scent of bougainvillea plants outside one's window.

But even if Sarne could find a way to translate *Myra Breckinridge* for the big screen, what kinds of actors could possibly populate such a gut-busting, rectum-rupturing farce? It wasn't until that question was addressed that the *Myra Breckinridge* project shrugged off the mantle of industry time bomb and took on the aspect of a significant p... event. Or, if you prefer, a train wreck.

Myra's chief antagonist in the bo... Buck Loner, a seedy cowboy star—a p... comic vehicle, Sarne thought, for spry r... veteran Mickey Rooney. But the next ... Sarne knew, John Huston had moseye... to Fox and expressed interest in the role. ... could any studio say no to the still-a... part-time actor and director of *The M... Falcon* and *The African Queen*? "I can't ... describe to you now how threatened I ... says Sarne, the Hollywood greenhorn. ... fuckin' John Huston, for Chrissake!"

Sarne's ideal choice for the salty c... agent Letitia Van Allen was another ... wood legend, Mae West—no matter th... 76-year-old actress had not worked ... 1943's *The Heat's On.* (She had, it is ... made a guest appearance on television's ... *ter Ed* in 1964.) West may have at this ... looked like as big an anachronism as ... Breckinridge herself, but Sarne was ... something. The hourglass-contoured a... had, with her slyly sexed-up persona, b... a trail for sexual comedy in the 30s. (O... the famous lines attributed to her: "Is t... pistol in your pocket, or are you just gl... see me?") And she remained an icon ... just of gay culture but of the countercu... in general. Fox agreed to go along with ... far-out notion—if Sarne could persuad... actress, whom he calls a "neglected nat... treasure," to come on board.

Mike Sarne took Bobby Fryer alo... meet Miss West at the Ravenswood, the ... lywood apartment building she owned, ... pying the penthouse apartment. In a ... Sarne compares to "something out of *S... Boulevard,*" he and Fryer were ushered ... West's male companion, an "aging mu... man" with Tony Curtis coiffure. Notin... uniformly pale-pink décor (including ch... draperies), and the nude statue of We... the piano, Sarne perched himself on th... tress's pale-pink sofa and waited.

Mae West finally tottered into the r... clad from head to toe in pale pink, an... spectfully listened to her suitors. Then ... informed them that if she should dei... join their little enterprise she would be ... ing her own material. Fox subsequent... fered West $300,000 for the role; with S... egging her on over Fryer's strenuous c... tions, she held out for, and got, a very he... $350,000.

There could be few more perfect illu... tions of David Brown's remark that H... wood used to be "fun" than the way S... went about the key assignment of ca... his leading lady. He and producer R... first trawled for their Myra on a giddy ... through the transvestite bars of Los A... les and San Francisco.

This was a rare break in the tensio... tween the two men at the center of ...

nridge, whom Fox had forced to be- the most unlikely of bedfellows. Their lities were as different as their dress , Fryer favoring tweeds and Gucci sins, Sarne preferring a tank top, bell- ns, and bare feet. Sarne describes who died in May of last year, as "a e, ginger-haired guy, with eczema all is face. He was very nervous and gig- lot—you know, this funny little guy."

"funny little guy" was actually some- of a Face himself, albeit in circles more exalted—that is, squarer—than in which Mike Sarne spun. Robert was in 1969 a highly accomplished way producer (*Mame, Sweet* ?) who had lately managed to his purview into movie pro- n, making *The Boston Stran-* nd *The Prime of Miss Jean* for Fox, which then attached *Myra Breckinridge.* He might njoyed his tour of West Coast ubs (though he still preferred Lansbury for the lead role), had never really taken to Sarne, even at their initial n meeting. Now he fiercely d having the young English- rced upon him.

winners of Sarne and Fryer's endered talent search were ly screen-tested, but Sarne not really see the ball-busting Myra resting on any of the ueens' broad shoulders. "They t particularly great actors, ey were very good as wom- notes.

hol "superstar" Candy Dar- é James Slattery) did a twirl ne's camera, but still no dice. had met Warhol through the Roy Lichtenstein, who'd done campaign for *Joanna,* and close enough to the silver- sphinx to share with him his trepida- out *Myra Breckinridge.* In classically fashion, Warhol told Sarne, "Oh, just alone. You can't get out of this."

desperate attempt to fill the biggest his problematic Hollywood debut, mentioned the name Raquel Welch to d Zanuck. (*Unknown transvestite? Pre- ox-office sex symbol of the day? Sure, the diff?!*) At which point Zanuck ned that Fox happened to have Miss then 28, under contractual obligation e a picture for the company—and for kdown price of $125,000. The trades oon spreading the word: Raquel is ... Myra Breckinridge!

a quite happy with Raquel doing it," Sarne, who nonetheless screen-tested Because she has a marvelously artifi- y of acting. And you could totally believe that she was a sex change in a mad sort of way.... To me she fitted kind of stylistically into my Pop-art gallery. And Mae fit into that, too: the pose, the walk—'I'm Pop art, I'm a Marvel comic.'"

When Welch showed up at Sarne's recently rented Malibu beach house to discuss the project, he was surprised to see her wearing a very non-Marvel caftan, worn perhaps in deference to his supposed underground credentials. This former beauty queen and weather girl was, she now says, desperate to find a more edifying use for the mind-blowing sexual triumphalism she evinced in hits such as *One Million Years B.C.* and *Fantastic Voyage.* Sarne and Myra came along at just the right time.



"IT'S ONLY A MOVIE"
John Huston enjoying a rare light moment on the set of *Myra Breckinridge.* He developed an implacable grudge against Mike Sarne after the young director was quoted calling Huston a "hack" in a magazine interview.

"I thought if I played an erudite, articulate person who was multifaceted and who was struggling between the masculine and the feminine sides of his/her nature that this was a great opportunity to do lots of amazing things as an actress," says Welch. "I was really attuned to the fact that I really needed to do something that showed that I had more ability than I was given credit for at that time—that I wasn't just a body and a face."

The face of Myra's male alter ego, Myron—which looms as a presence in Vidal's book and is accorded visual manifestation in the movie—came to Mike Sarne in a cathode flash. One evening the director happened across Rex Reed, the photogenic movie critic, on a TV talk show. The saturnine scribe was, says Sarne, "camping about, criticizing movies." Reed had attained notoriety for his dryly trenchant movie-star profiles and bitchy movie reviews (*Joanna* was among his victims). Reed declined to be interviewed for this article, but in 1970, shortly before the film came out, he wrote a long, acerbic article for *Playboy* about the making of *Myra Breckinridge* to accompany a "wild pictorial" the magazine had derived from the film's somewhat harmless orgy scene. Reed, who had no previous film experience, described his reaction when Fox approached him to play the part of film theorist Myron: "Under no circumstances was I interested in playing a homosexual who has an operation to make him into a woman." Fox assured Reed that this aspect of Myron's character would be masked by the dream conceit, and that he would have approval over his sections of the script.

Although Sarne had handed in a draft of his screenplay and managed to agglomerate a phenomenal if unlikely cast for *Myra Breckinridge,* he was unperturbed in the summer of 1969 when he noticed that the term of his directorial contract with Fox was about to expire with no shooting date in sight. "I had this funny feeling they didn't want to start," Sarne says. "Gore was doing everything to stop this picture getting made, the gossip was starting. I felt my life drifting away. In Hollywood, there are hundreds of writers and people on option for doing things, waiting for the studio to call, and their expenses are being picked up ... "

Among the published rumors about Sarne's project was an allegation that Vidal was offering to pay Fox $75,000 if it would fire the director. A source close to Vidal disputes any cash offer, but allows that the author was prepared to forgo part of his remuneration should Sarne be dismissed.

Sarne claims his bags were already packed for a flight back to London and freedom when the Fox messenger arrived at his beach house with news that a September 15, 1969, start date had been set for *Myra Breckinridge.* Now he would have to honor his side of the contract and direct the thing (which ended up rolling on September 22).

Still, for all Sarne's protestations, Fox's financial emoluments were more than hand-

Myra Breckinridge

[illegible] And socially, he was well ensconced among a hip crowd of fellow Europeans headed by the director Roman Polanski. Among the locals, Sarne could count as friends perma-swingers Warren Beatty and Robert Evans, plus up-and-coming superagent Sue Mengers (who represented Vidal and was a model, it is said, for *Myra Breckinridge*'s Letitia Van Allen character).

On August 9, 1969, Sarne received a call in Malibu telling him that on the previous night Sharon Tate, Roman Polanski's wife, had been brutally murdered along with four others at her home on Bel Air's Cielo Drive. (Polanski was in Europe on business the night of the murders.) In the wake of the horrendous crime, as the frantic hunt for Tate's unknown killers began, Polanski came to stay briefly at Sarne's place, bringing with him a phalanx of F.B.I. agents, who slept around the house on sofas and in armchairs.

In the months before Charles Manson and his associates were apprehended and jailed for the Cielo Drive massacre (and another killing, in Silverlake), anyone who knew Polanski was both suspect and potential target. A pair of Mike Sarne's neighbors showed up on his doorstep, dressed in their swimsuits, asking him to boot his friend out. Roman stayed.

The temper of the times was markedly changing, and not just within the gilded precincts of the Malibu Colony. Before the Manson murders, recalls Sarne, Hollywood's European crowd "were the little darlings. When Sharon was murdered, we were no longer the darlings. Between the time that Sharon was murdered and the time they caught Manson, a big anti-foreigner thing kicked in, you know.

"There was a cool wind through California. So suddenly I wasn't so funny anymore. *Myra Breckinridge* wasn't so funny anymore. It wasn't the Love Generation anymore."

Embattled producer Bobby Fryer had meanwhile managed to convince Fox that if it insisted on keeping Sarne as director, it should at least commission a brand-new screenplay to override Sarne's. That Fox acceded to this demand showed how little confidence it had in Sarne as a writer, and how little control it had over the project as a whole.

Fryer's choice of writer was David Giler, an unproduced screenwriter who had first appeared in Fryer's office pitching an adaptation of Tom Wolfe's *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*. Giler immediately heard that Gore Vidal regarded him, like Sarne, as a "bunny." Giler also happened to know Sarne socially, yet this connection did not inhibit the newcomer from quickly proposing that Fox replace Sarne with no less a talent than George Cukor, the director of such immutable Hollywood classics as *The Philadelphia Story*, *The Women*, and *Adam's Rib*. Giler says he wanted to play *Myra Breckinridge* straight, to "do this thing like it was *The Philadelphia Story* and let the outrageousness take care of itself."

According to Giler, Fox agreed with his and Fryer's request that should Giler's script prove to be acceptable Cukor (born in 1899) would replace Sarne on the project. (*Jumped-up likely lad from England? Ancient filmmaking deity? Sure, what's the diff?!*) "There was a parallel situation going on," marvels Giler, who would later, as a writer-producer, own a piece of the *Alien* franchise. "There were two movies happening at this point."

At a meeting with the film's cast members, Giler ventured to discuss one of his ideas with Mae West. "I said something about how maybe her character could have known the John Huston character 30 years ago, or something like that," says Giler. "An icy chill comes over the room. Mae leans over and pats me on the hand and says, 'Mae West never plays a character over 26.'"

West was adding to the proceedings surreal touches worthy of Luis Buñuel. "She also handed out a mimeographed sheet of things she wanted in the movie," Giler recalls. "Well, by Point 2 it was clear to me that she had not read the book—or the script. And Point 3 was 'two musical numbers.' I thought, How do I get through this meeting?"

Gore Vidal sent a telex from Rome endorsing David Giler's new script. Fox too seemed to approve. Yet Brown and Zanuck never did bring in George Cukor to replace Mike Sarne—which is why Giler now speaks of being on the "losing side" of the *Myra Breckinridge* struggle. By Mike Sarne's account, the idea of being on the "winning side" appealed to him not a whit. He had been quite aware of the Cukor plot—and had fully endorsed it. Anything to get out of his bind. "I said, 'That's fantastic! Go for it!'" says Sarne, who notes that another of Fryer's Myra candidates was Elizabeth Taylor.

A week before shooting was to begin on the Fox lot, the principal cast members gathered in John Huston's suite at the Hotel Bel-Air for one final read-through of the latest script, which had been cobbled together from both sides' versions. Raquel Welch was dismayed to find that the Giler/Sarne hybrid pages were no more coherent than any of the other versions she'd read.

"I went into the bathroom and had myself a cry," says Welch. "And when I came out John Huston was standing there. I had red eyes and everything, and he said, 'My darling, what's the matter?' I said, 'Mr. Huston, I'm just so scared, I don't k[illegible] what to think. They keep rewriting [illegible] script, and I think it's getting worse—getting worse or is it getting better? Co[illegible] you help?' And he said, 'Darling, don' worry about a thing. It's just a movi only a movie.'"

For all her unassuaged despair, W says she never once considered quittin film. When the shooting date rolled ar she strapped it on like a trouper and s onto the Fox lot. She had even, in th terests of goodwill, made a pre-produ trip to Mae West's Ravenswood penth "What's your name again?" asked the actress. (Rex Reed later revealed that said of Welch, "She's a sweet little t but no real woman would play this pa

Even Myra Breckinridge could not been anything but proud of Fox's c of costumers for the picture being ma her name. In charge of Mae West's rai would be none other than Edith Head, lywood's nonpareil wardrobe mistress, year-old veteran of pictures such as *All Eve*, *Sunset Boulevard*, and *Rear Window* a winner of eight Academy Awards.

Accoutrements for Welch and the re the cast would be provided by newc Theadora Van Runkle, a 30-ish costu whose stellar work in *The Thomas C Affair* and *Bonnie and Clyde* had not dazzled Hollywood but also set alight wider fashion world. Thanks to Van Ru beautifully conceived and executed retr signs, Welch would never look more br takingly fine than she did in *Myra*.

Despite the double generation gap tween *Myra*'s two leading ladies, t was palpable tension between them fore filming, Sarne had sold Mae We the idea of wearing only black and v throughout the picture, as a visual ho to old Hollywood. On the day that and Welch were scheduled to share a s together, Welch showed up in a Van Ru designed black dress with a white ruf lar that plunged around her décolle The dress was, says Welch, "confisca and later returned with the ruff spr light blue. She and West performed scene, but not together—they never oc the same frame in *Myra Breckinridge*.

That was just the beginning of *M* problems. Co-producer James Cresson after a week. A publicist was fired for ing stories about all the dramas besettin production. And John Huston develope implacable grudge against Sarne, who called him a "hack" in a magazine i view. (Sarne insists that he was misqu and had merely said that Huston " act.") So the older man would liste Sarne's instructions, then ignore them tween takes Huston groused about th

ng clause in Mae West's contract, was cramping his style, cigar-wise. executives noticed that not all smok- re complying with this particular di- from Miss West. "The aroma or of pot seemed to be rising off the t while we were making the movie," avid Brown. "Pot is a felony in Cali- And the haze could not have em- from one person." Sarne was not us to the dope nimbus over the set, he attributes mainly to the young ex- 10 were working on *Myra,* and to the id crew of *Beyond the Valley of the* he comparably scabrous picture be- ot next door. Directing that project xploitation potentate Russ Meyer, ability to spin huge profits ny budgets (his 1968 *Vixen* rned $72,000 into more 5 million) persuaded Rich- nuck to let him loose on a studio picture.

tales of on-the-set felonies d David Brown less than rrible reports" he was get- ily about the state of the *reckinridge* production. No emed able to guess what -whom several of the film's rs describe as "arrogant"— lo from one day to the next which parts of David Giler's ie might include and which f his own. Even at this late with the meter running at us rate, a constant volley nos flew among Sarne and d Fryer, haggling over script

1 Raquel Welch succumbed memo madness, David old a visiting journalist: "She ip these ten-page position ; and insists on reading o me. Can you imagine ng more frightening than that?"

Reed, in his *Playboy* article, depict- iovie set taken to the brink of chaos amateurish director who had also tted the sin, in Reed's eyes, of being red. ("He hates scenes with any kind og," Reed seethed.) By Reed's ac- the film was pushed further over the y the wounded-animal skittishness of l Welch and the dickless dithering of ts at Fox, "the gray little people who all the administrations because they nake a commitment to anything."

atever Mike Sarne's vision for *Myra ridge* may have been, it proved high- ive to his collaborators, a state of af- hich provoked both aggravation and ement. "I remember Edith turned to ce," says Theadora Van Runkle, "and d, 'Thea, do you think we're working on a dirty movie?' And I said, 'Yeah, I think we are.'" Meanwhile, Sarne says his use of a red-white-and-blue color motif in the film led to accusations by Richard Zanuck that he was "pissing on the flag." Raquel Welch, who wore a Stars and Stripes bathing suit in one scene, describes how Bobby Fryer infuriated Sarne by having one of the sets repainted from red, white, and blue to drab olive overnight.

Despite the apparent hysteria that was consuming the production of *Myra Breckinridge,* Mike Sarne insists that more often than not the common response was laughter. "The thing you have to understand," says Sarne, "is that at a lot of these meetings everyone was holding their sides and falling



IS THAT A PISTOL IN YOUR HAIRDO?
Mae West at *Myra Breckinridge*'s New York City premiere in 1970. She wrote her own dialogue for the film, including this response after being told a young gentleman's height: "Forget about the six feet—let's talk about the seven inches."

to the floor with laughter. Richard Zanuck was running to the bathroom!"

Nor would Zanuck take Sarne seriously when the self-professed reluctant director requested that the studio solve its problems by firing Fryer and putting him "out of his misery." Zanuck "sort of laughed," says Sarne. "No, no, no," the executive said, "you two are going to have to stick together."

Even Raquel Welch bears out Sarne's talk of relative good humor in the face of rampant disorder. "Mike would show up and say, 'Right, where's Sexy Rexy in his ice-cream suit?'" says Welch, mimicking a cheerful English accent. "And Rex would show up in a tweed suit with elbow patches, carrying a pipe." Reed wore the white suit per Sarne's instruction, but never for a moment bothered to mask his contempt for the director.

According to David Brown, Reed reached the end of his tether when he was asked to deliver the line Myron utters when he wakes up in the hospital at the end of the film. (It's all a dream, remember?) The line is: "Where are my tits?!" Reed refused on grounds, presumably, of taste. Brown threatened to have another actor voice the line, and to make it painfully prominent. So, near the end of *Myra Breckinridge,* one can enjoy the sight of the fastidious film critic reluctantly intoning, "Where are my tits?!"

Reed would have his revenge in spades, bad-mouthing the picture at every opportunity. The *Los Angeles Times*'s Joyce Haber frequently published anti-Sarne vitriol from, among others, Reed, Giler (who was quoted wondering why the Kennedys died and Sarne lived), and Fryer. "We thought we might be able to get rid of Sarne publicly," says Fryer's co-producer James Cresson. "It's amazing Zanuck didn't fire our asses."

In 1969 the media had not quite succumbed to the false-insider consciousness of our own era, where Hollywood politics are deconstructed for us and served up as actual entertainment. Only the most overblown works in progress were found newsworthy, films such as *Gone with the Wind* and *Cleopatra. Myra Breckinridge* could claim none of the latter film's internecine love affairs, continent-hopping locations, or stratospheric costs, but it nonetheless managed to become the subject of national fascination. There was something compelling about this *Myra* thing, with its heady brew of star power, generational dissonance, corporate folly, and good old-fashioned smut.

Gossip columnists quaffed freely of this concoction, and even opinion-making magazines such as *Life* and *Time* filed dispatches from the front lines, the latter wondering on its November 28, 1969, cover, which featured a mannequin version of Myra/Welch, CAN TODAY'S SEX SYMBOL FIND HAPPINESS AS MYRA BRECKINRIDGE?

After 12 weeks of shooting, Fox finally stepped in and pulled the plug on the whole farce on December 19, 1969, but had to allow Sarne to finish the film with more shooting in January. All the studio could do in defense of

Myra Breckinridge

Myra Breckinridge was to place an ad in *The Hollywood Reporter*. THINK 20TH. TOGETHERness, it said. The accompanying photograph said otherwise. There was Welch, pneumatic and Stepford-serene; Reed, aloof as ever; Mae West, looking more like a Madame Tussaud's exhibit than a working actress; and game old John Huston in cowboy drag. Then there was Sarne, bearded and beatific, resembling a superannuated beach bum, and little Bobby Fryer, grinning and bearing it. "Motley" doesn't begin to describe the way this ensemble looked.

However fractious the filming of *Myra Breckinridge* may have been, Mike Sarne's completed movie was, in its prerelease form, by no means regarded as a lost cause. For all the bad juju that had consumed the set, no one quite knew how the public would respond to Sarne's distinctive take on Vidal. Such were the uncertainties of the time that the filmmakers left test screenings with the distinct feeling that they could be onto something big.

During editing, Sarne had another one of his ideas, and a pretty good one: he would leaven Myra's lurid odyssey by cutting in clips of classic Hollywood films as appropriately absurd punctuation to the action. Sarne says he was inspired in this by the movie montages Stan Sheff used to create and project at the Whisky à Go Go; David Giler claims the whole thing was there in his script. Either way, Fox gave Sarne the run of its archives, so *Myra Breckinridge* now had a cute gimmick that might have been called postmodern had it come a decade later.

By both Sarne's and Zanuck's accounts, the director's final cut went over well at a test screening in Newport Beach in Orange County, and even better when it was previewed in San Francisco. By Sarne's estimate "about 3,000 gays" whooped and hollered appreciatively at the film's every innuendo and arch Hollywood reference. As Sarne recalls the screening, "They're getting all the gags, they're getting every little nuance—they're loving it! And some of them are dancing in the aisles. They were dressed up as movie stars, some of them—you know?"

One of Sarne's most treasured moments in the film is a scene in which Welch's Myra performs diligent fellatio on Rex Reed's Myron (don't worry about the metaphysics involved). In the original version, as Myron reaches crisis the director elected to cut to one of his old Hollywood clips: "a scene," says Sarne, "where Shirley Temple was milking a goat, and as she milks the goat, the goat squirts the milk in her face. And she goes 'Ohhhh!'" This particular cut went down well at the San Francisco screening, Sarne recalls.

"At that point the fucking theater exploded. It went, 'BOOM!,' like an atom bomb. The whole place went, 'Aaaaaah . . . ' and then one big BOOM! Zanuck is holding his sides he can hardly stay in his seat. . . . The gays were loving it—everybody was loving it."

Exultant scenes followed. "Zanuck was kissing me and cuddling me and groveling on the floor. We were hugging each other. We said, 'We got a hit, we got a hit!'" raves Sarne. "Kissing each other, drinking, punching each other, 'This is it, this is it . . . We've turned it around and made it a popular hit.'"

And not just a gay hit, either. Because in those days, before the demographic arts informed Hollywood's every move, "gay" was not considered a demographic at all. According to David Brown, the "gay market" had, for better or for worse, not been a factor in the making of *Myra Breckinridge*. "We weren't homophobic," says Brown. "We were just homo-ignorant."

After Sarne returned to L.A. from the San Francisco triumph, he felt as if he were "king of the hill." And then reality struck. Sarne noticed a change in Richard Zanuck, who had seemed to be in his corner during the filming of the picture. Back then, says Sarne, Zanuck was all mischief: "He talked about the rape scene: 'How you going to shoot the rape scene? How do you show the dildo?' It was like a boys' night out, you know, all the time."

It was a different Dick Zanuck who called Sarne into his office to talk about "that Shirley Temple scene." "I said, 'Which one?'" says Sarne. "Because I had about three or four of them. 'You know, the one where the goat squirts the milk in her face . . . that's got to go.' I said, 'Sorry, bubby, it's staying—it's the best scene in the film, the biggest laugh in the film. . . . In San Francisco, you were pissing yourself laughing. I remember, you had to go to the toilet.'"

Zanuck was quite insistent. Sarne reminded him that the scene had already been cleared by Fox's legal department. "He was getting really upset now, embarrassed," says Sarne. "He said, 'I've got a telegram here from my father, Darryl, who I haven't spoken to in 18 months, saying that the president of the United States [then Richard Nixon] has called him, telling him that shot has to go, because Shirley Temple, who's a delegate to the United Nations, has heard about it and she's furious and that it's got to go.'"

Richard Zanuck says that at the time he was not estranged from his father, and that he does not remember excising Temple's goat-squirt scene from the film. Regardless, no such scene appears in the finished picture.

Sarne insists that Shirley Temple was just the beginning. Other veteran stars began to throw their weight around. "It seemed like every day somebody had an objection to something," says Sarne. "I ended up having to pull out all these clips from the film. You just can't do that and expect a film to up—you've totally destroyed its rhythm." director estimates that 15 minutes we from his original version of *Myra Breckin*

According to *The New York Tim* 2,000-strong crowd bellied up t barricades outside New York's Crit Theater on the night of *Myra Breckinr* June 23 premiere. Fittingly, this was a quiet gathering: windows were smashed ilians pitched into the street, policem jured, arrests made.

Many of the spectators were there to at Raquel Welch in all her sex-bomb s dor; quite another contingent was dra the prospect of glimpsing Mae West, reportedly taken her first plane trip years just to attend. For the observant er, the premiere offered a re-enactment film's on-the-set dramas: according to V when she arrived in front of the theater, men grabbed me by the arms and p me through a side door." Welch says sh held in a side room until it was time fo to take her seat. She was informed that West—who had been sitting in line i limo behind hers—had no intention of ing the red carpet with her junior co-st

Inside the theater, after the mink had been parked, the cummerbunds ened, and the lights dimmed, the aud was greeted by the startling image o Reed lying awake in some *Barbarella*-operating theater. He was being attend a cigarette-chomping and clearly non ized surgeon, played by John Carra For no explicable reason there was a audience in this operating theater—a applauded enthusiastically when Carr gelded Reed with a neat flourish. C the title sequence, in which the marvel overripe Reed and Welch do a soft number along Hollywood Boulevard to ley Temple's "You Gotta S.M.I.L.E. H.A. Double P. Y." Cut to: footage of clear explosion. Cut to: Welch in *One lion Years B.C.* So far, so camp.

But, sitting among the swells in the ence, David Brown and Richard Zanu alized something was wrong as the fil spooled. "Even our wives weren't laugh says Brown, who allows that the "biz sense of humor that he and Zanuck sh may have on this occasion diverged the popular taste.

On the plus side, Mae West was in sic form in *Myra Breckinridge*, vindic Sarne's decision to let her write her lines. At one point she asks some y hunk how tall he is. "Six feet seven inc he replies. West pauses until the aud can just about see it coming: "Forget a the six feet—let's talk about the seven inc

And she got her two musical num staged as a grand and inexplicable nigh

plete with a phalanx of vaguely Fosse-ck male dancers. Like the rest of *Myra ridge*'s principals, West was acting in n movie. As *The New York Times* put e were "various degrees of stylization" play throughout the picture. Raquel every inch the movie goddess that spired to be, delivered the character's mission statements with spokesmodel y, and even brought a certain vim and o her violation of poor Rusty (played unknown Roger Herren). But it wasn't . Rex Reed was always skirting the heavy-lidded and dripping with dis-r the whole undertaking. (He, too, rmitted to write some of his own dia-And as the gone-to-seed Buck Loner, uston played it broader than the Mesa e, as though to ensure that even the seats got at least something out of the farrago.

ne's Hollywood setting is a carnal where hypocrisy is denoted by faux-er-music trills and burlesque stings. blames the movie's ham-fisted po-satire on David Giler.) Sarne's pre-use of vintage-movie clips does here ere goose the narrative, and even es to transform the buggery scene tour de force of sorts. Yet there is at art of the film a profound contradic-at its makers somehow never both-address: Gore Vidal's *Myra Breckin-*was anti-Pop; Sarne's approach was shedly Pop.

quel Welch sums up the movie with ble acuity: "There was this strange et of personalities that were attached film, and each one of them was big-an life in their own sphere. And you t, Maybe this is the best idea that appened, and maybe it's the worst."

critical vote on that particular issue landslide. *The Wall Street Journal* was t blunt, calling *Myra* "distasteful, of-, dishonest." Other reviewers made sport of Sarne and Vidal's ungainly nild. "About as funny as a child mo-'—*Time.* "A tired, smirking elephant o place to go."—*The New York Times.* bson's choice of unprecedented un-ntness."—*Newsweek.*

n Myra's erstwhile idol, Parker Tyler, out of the woodwork to give the film umbs down: in a letter to *The New Times,* Tyler said he'd already been tied" by Vidal's book and was now be-retchedly vulgarized" by Sarne's film.

ke Sarne did not attend the premiere of *Myra Breckinridge,* and was not around l his reviews. Sarne was at the time en-d in an apartment on Rome's Piazza gna, working on a movie idea possi-en more outlandish than the one he'd mpleted. John Phillips, the leader of the Mamas and the Papas who served as a musical consultant on *Myra Breckinridge,* had enjoined Sarne to direct a "semi-documentary" that would cast the two pals as none other than Lord Byron and Percy Bysshe Shelley, with their respective ladies in appropriately parallel roles. This consumptive-poet buddy movie would come to nothing.

Back in America, *Gore Vidal's Myra Breckinridge* (as it was officially known) was being presented to cinemagoers as a titillating taste of taboo: "The Book That Couldn't Be Written . . . Is Now the Movie That Couldn't Be Made!" The crass come-on worked momentarily: the film enjoyed a more than respectable box-office debut, breaking by an impressive margin the first-day records of major theaters in New York and Hollywood. Then, David Brown recalls, the reviews started to hit home, unopposed by positive word of mouth. Business slumped dramatically. And, according to Vidal, the film even caused a precipitous drop in the sales of the *Myra Breckinridge* paperback.

As the movie tanked, Fox's other kinky youth-market contender, *Beyond the Valley of the Dolls,* shimmied into profitability. Russ Meyer's film, written by Roger Ebert, may have been little more than a ragbag of pseudo-shocking generational clichés, post-Manson violence, and barely coherent plotlines, but it cost only $2 million to make and earned more than $10 million at the box office. From such proceeds the studio could afford to pay the $1.45 million in damages that was posthumously awarded in 1975 to *Valley of the Dolls* author Jacqueline Susann—a friend, incidentally, of the David Browns—over the misuse of her title.

Gore Vidal's prediction of receivership for Fox did not quite come true, but the combined moral taint of *Myra Breckinridge* and *Beyond the Valley of the Dolls* did help to bring down the curtain on the Brown-and-Zanuck regime. At a September 1970 meeting of the Twentieth Century Fox board, Darryl Zanuck stood up and, in admirably dramatic form, channeled the ill feeling that was building up toward his son and David Brown. He brought the board's attention to another sexy number they were hoping to pimp to America's moviegoers: Philip Roth's onanistic comedy *Portnoy's Complaint,* bought for half a million dollars. Zanuck *père* had prepared for the Fox board members—all of whom he himself had appointed—a detailed inventory of the Roth novel's off-color words, which by one account he proceeded to read in full: "Cock—16 . . . Shit—29 . . . Shove it in me, big boy—1." All eyes turned to the men responsible. "Tits—13 . . . "

"We expected right there and then a hand on our shoulder and a voice to say, 'You're fired,'" recalls Brown. Zanuck the younger plays down the impact of his father's recital, but the hand on the shoulder came soon enough. Two days before the end of 1970, the Fox board met in New York and fired David Brown and Richard Zanuck. (On the credit side of their ledger, the two men had brought *M*A*S*H, Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid,* and *Patton* to Fox.) The pair would get their groove back in the realm of independent production, bringing the world mega-hits such as *The Sting* and *Jaws;* they have both thrived in Hollywood ever since. Darryl Zanuck resigned from Fox in May 1971. He died in 1979.

For his part, Gore Vidal says that all he has ever seen of the *Myra Breckinridge* movie is a clip that ran before one of his many TV interviews. The book is still regarded as a highlight of an unimpeachable literary career; Harold Bloom proposed it as part of the Western Canon.

The cast of the movie may have been seen as guilty by association, but any embarrassment was transitory. Mae West was wheeled out one more time, for 1978's *Sextette,* another disastrous romp that did not significantly blemish her legend. Rex Reed subsequently took on a handful of acting roles; he still writes about movies in *The New York Observer.* John Huston acted and directed many more times before his death in 1987; *Myra Breckinridge* constitutes barely a footnote in his several biographies.

Raquel Welch says the film took some of the sheen off her mainstream appeal, and certainly it didn't help her escape the sex-symbol cul-de-sac. The actress says it would take another four years before anyone recognized her talents as a "light comedienne," in 1974's *The Three Musketeers.*

Curiously enough, Mike Sarne chanced to showcase in *Myra Breckinridge* two TV sex symbols of the near future. Playing the part of Mary-Ann—a pretty girl whom Vidal's book describes as "mentally retarded" and whom Myra attempts to seduce on-screen—was future Charlie's Angel Farrah Fawcett. (Fawcett, through her publicist, declined to be interviewed for this article.) In the sublimely apt role of "Stud," *sans* trademark mustache: Mr. Tom Selleck!

Mike Sarne would spend his own 70s attempting to recover from his ill-starred fling with Myra. In the wake of the film's release he realized that his calls to the William Morris people were not being returned—nor, it seemed, did anyone else in Hollywood care for his society. It didn't have to be that way, since, according to Tanya Sarne, the director had turned down several projects while making *Myra Breckinridge.* Over time, Sarne says, he has come to see himself as the "patsy" in the whole mess, and there are those who agree with that view, among them Sue Mengers, who reflects, "If anybody was going to be bullied, it was Michael."

"Zanuck and Brown threw Sarne to the

Myra Breckinridge

[illegible] says Hugh Fordin, now a record-label owner and producer of Broadway-cast albums. Fordin believes the studio knew that *Myra Breckinridge* was unfilmable when it passed the project to Sarne. "*Myra Breckinridge* was the fault of Fox not knowing what to do, and they shouldn't have done it in the first place. Big book, fabulous author—that's all it was to them." Adds the big book's fabulous author: "They only bought it for the dildo scene."

In the mid-70s, Sarne exiled himself to Brazil (somewhat in the manner of fugitive Great Train Robber Ronnie Biggs, whom, appropriately enough, he met) and in 1975 made a picture called *Intimidade* for the South American market. He returned to London in 1977, and shortly thereafter was divorced from his wife, with whom he had had two children. Tanya Sarne now enjoys international renown as the designer behind the label Ghost. Mike Sarne, meanwhile, is raising the three kids he's had with his French girlfriend; he makes a living by acting, painting, and directing the odd commercial. "You call this a living?" he asks with a vaudevillian shrug.

It all might have been so different had Twentieth Century Fox just paid him his writer's fee and let George Cukor take over. "They might have made a sad little picture that wouldn't have done anyone any harm," Sarne muses. Who knows, he says, "a lot of people might have found it a worthy project."

Just as we will never know how George Cukor's *Myra Breckinridge* would have played, we will likely never see Sarne's original [illegible] the one that went down so well before [illegible] allegedly neutered it. There is no direct cut DVD of *Myra Breckinridge,* with the [illegible] tendant chance to frame the whole sorry [illegible] fair with hindsight commentary; the film [illegible] currently not available even on video, [illegible] stacked on the appropriate "Cult Movies" [illegible] shelf alongside *Beyond the Valley of the Dolls* [illegible] and its ilk. Only bootleg collectors are [illegible] terested now, and a core of camp follow[illegible] Still, *Myra Breckinridge* will always occupy [illegible] an indelible spot in the memory of anyone [illegible] who was involved in its making—and in [illegible] anyone who has ever seen it.

"That's the strange thing about this [illegible] superficial movie," says Mike Sarne. "[illegible] the silly, superficial project and all its shoddy [illegible] meretricious qualities. It still has a sort [illegible] horrible grandeur. And especially for me [illegible]

Michael Ovitz

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 408 the heart of all matters Ovitzian. So here goes: Agents procure work for their clients—soliciting employment, dealing with contracts—whereas managers, who are legally prohibited from procurement, deal with everything else, both the micro and the macro, from booking tour schedules to soothing the stars' tender sensibilities. The trend these days is to have both, each receiving a 10 percent cut. As a practical matter, though, managers can circumvent the no-procurement rule by using lawyers as go-betweens with the studios and networks. For example, Leonardo DiCaprio has no agent at all—just Rick Yorn and a gaggle of attorneys.

There's another distinction as well: Agents, due to conflict-of-interest concerns, are legally prohibited from owning properties in which their clients appear. Managers can own whatever they want—TV shows, movies—and therefore stand to make a bundle on their clients' projects. Bernie Brillstein and Brad Grey, for instance, have produced hit TV shows and movies created by, written by, and starring their own clients—everything from *The Larry Sanders Show* to Adam Sandler's 1998 *The Wedding Singer.* (As you might imagine, agents are not entirely pleased about this situation and are currently trying to change the rules of the game.)

Ovitz wants in on the manager action, writ much larger than Brillstein-Grey. His venture actually includes three separate but fraternal companies—AMG (for managing the talent), ATG (for TV production), and APG (for film production), which is largely Rick Yorn's domain and receives some 60 percent of its financing from Studio Canal, the European cable-TV colossus. (Studio Canal's parent company, Vivendi, also owns a majority stake in Universal Pictures—a tidy subplot, given that Universal is run by Ovitz's ex–CAA partner and ex-friend Ron Meyer.) In exchange, Studio Canal gets foreign-distribution rights. As it stands now, APG has a whopping 37 films in development with other studios and 15 in various stages of production, including Richard Donner's adaptation of Crichton's *Timeline,* Edward Burns's low-budget romantic comedy *Sidewalks of New York,* and Scorsese's *Gangs of New York,* an $80 million co-production with Miramax.

That the last film features two of the top stars in Hollywood, DiCaprio and Diaz, is no coincidence. Both, along with Scorsese, are AMG clients—or, as critics would say, *the* AMG clients. (Ovitz dismisses the rumor that his top clients pay him a discounted commission or no commission at all. "When you manage," he says, "10 percent is pretty much the floor.")

Without the collective clout of the stars and the director, coupled with the diplomatic savvy of Ovitz and Yorn, it's unlikely that the movie, a long-dormant Scorsese pet project about the mid-19th-century proto-Mafia, would have been made, and AMG's commitment to the picture stands as the best example of its viability. As such, the company has a lot riding on the film, tentatively scheduled for release next winter. If it and/or the Crichton project hits big, AMG will be an 800-pound gorilla. If they don't—and no Scorsese film, however acclaimed, has ever entered blockbuster territory—you can bet that Ovitz and Yorn will hear catcalls from the back booths at The Grill in Beverly Hills.

To some degree, they already are. "Say what you want about all those big names and titles," says one of the top producers [illegible] town, a bit hopefully. "By swinging for the fences, churning it out fast and furious, they're setting themselves up to take a big fall. They flop and Studio Canal gets cold feet, it'll be over by halftime."

"If we bomb out because we make good movies," Schulman says, "we *deserve* to fail. If we make good movies, there's nothing bad that can happen. And the same for the client."

The AMG machine can be seen cranking in high gear on a chill Friday [illegible] in mid-January, inside a cavernous sound stage in Studio City. It is a hive of activity orchestrated largely by the actor-director Edward Burns, who, along with his brother Brian and others, is producing a sitcom pilot called *The Fighting Fitzgeralds.* The Burns brothers are AMG clients, and [illegible] is co-producing the show with NBC, which dearly needs a new sitcom to bolster its [illegible] cid Tuesday-night lineup.

And so all the heavies are here: Ovitz, Rick Yorn, ATG head of television [illegible] Tannenbaum, even the newly installed [illegible] of entertainment at NBC, Jeff Zucker. The tableau is pure AMG. The pilot's director, James Widdoes, is an AMG client, [illegible] one of its stars, Justin Louis. And the show's theme song comes courtesy of AMG's [illegible] Felder, late of the Eagles. Felder too is accompanied by a fetching blonde wom[illegible]

The Fighting Fitzgeralds is notably Burns-centric, given that he directed the [illegible] sleeper *The Brothers McMullen.* The pilot is about a zany, working-class Irish-Catholic family whose patriarch, a retired fireman played by Brian Dennehy, inveighs against contraception, rages about Kids These Days, and says "Jesus Mary Joseph" at regular intervals. During the taping, in which the same scene is repeated and repeated, Ovitz, [illegible]

bottle of Crystal Geyser, mills around age, fretting that one of the actors is ng on the other actors' lines. Ovitz is eterate fretter. Nearby, the heavies laugh ugh at joke after joke, take after take. st you find this uplifting, in a back-, esprit de corps sort of way. After a though, you begin to wonder if the iessage of the endless, occasionally aughter is "It's so funny . . . isn't it?" ys later, Ovitz calls to report that has picked up the show and will air it 1 months. This is welcome news to ince these have been the best of days ie worst of days for ATG, by far the financially risky of Ovitz's compa- ast fall the pesky rookie flabbergast- TV industry by landing four shows ime-time network schedules—an im- ve number in an era when studio- ed shows dominate isiness. The shows ered with much fan- ione more so than *reet,* a splashy hour- 'dramedy" created x by that millennial ation of Aaron Spell- arren Star, who gave *lrose Place* and *Sex e City.*

en, in classic TV- ry fashion, the earth d up and swallowed f them. Two were led, and the two y survivors, *The We- ow,* a sitcom starring 1 Weber (*Wings*), *rosse Pointe,* a Dar- tar spoof of teen , face iffy futures. iller, though, was *treet,* which cost more than $2 mil- er episode—about $600,000 of which rs to have come straight out of Ovitz's ocket, according to the *Los Angeles* The remaining $1.4 million was cov- y a licensing agreement with Fox and ncing deal with Sony, which, in ex- e for the right to distribute Ovitz's , gives ATG advances of $350,000 isode for comedies and $450,000 for as. (Neither side is entirely satisfied the deal, which expires next year, Ovitz will begin trolling for a new gic partner.")

told, ATG's deficit for *The Street* alone an to at least $7 million—little of will be recouped. In the high-flying veepstakes, one hit alone can ring the y bell for an independent production any, as evidenced by DreamWorks' *City,* whose early success covered a f other DreamWorks shows, such as the Ted Danson sitcom *Ink,* that tanked. Two hits and you're God.

"It's my money," says Ovitz, who stands to lose millions if none of the shows fly. Compared with other independents, he's doing a large amount of self-financing, and right now the company is hemorrhaging money. The Hollywood naysayers point out that this is a bad sign; Ovitz, while looking for financial partners, has talked with AT&T, Barry Diller, Rupert Murdoch's News Corp., and NBC, but landed no deals. If nothing else, this enables Ovitz to say, "I'll do what I want with it. This is my gamble. It's my *gamble.*"

Gamble: his word, not yours. He says, "I made a bet. It's either going to pay off or it's not. Most of the money is wrapped up in television production. And I'm not worried about the management part of it." He tries a different tack. "When we did CAA for the first five years, if we could have all committed seppuku—ritual hari-kari—we would have done it. It was tough. Finally, by 1980, we started saying, 'Hey, this is cool. This is sort of working.'"

So now he places his faith in his current television projects, including two potential monsters: an unnamed Crichton drama (his last one was *ER*) and a sitcom starring Ellen DeGeneres. "Our model *is* different," says Eric Tannenbaum, the well-regarded 37-year-old who took over ATG after a successful tenure at Columbia TriStar. He acknowledges that *The Street*'s death was a major blow, and, like Ovitz, agrees that they foolishly burned money by filming in New York City. He also says that ATG has endured some growing pains, including a lack of clout with the networks—*The Street* might have lasted longer had ATG been able to leverage a time slot in which the show did not go up against NBC's *The West Wing.* "We want a roster, and we want a team, and we want to have four or five or six shows on the air. . . . [The TV business] is somewhat of a numbers game."

And the numbers, Ovitz believes, ultimately favor the *player.* "We will have done 23 television pilots in less than two years," he says, perhaps a bit hyperbolically. "If we continue at this pace, we will do 75 television pilots. That means we have to score two times out of 75. Two times. Two times! If I can't do that in three years—score on those shows in three to four years—then I *deserve* to lose the money I put in."



OLD GUARD
From left, CAA co-founders Ron Meyer, Ovitz, and Bill Haber with former William Morris agent Phil Weltman (the father figure to whom they dedicated CAA), partners Michael Rosenfeld Sr. and Rowland Perkins, and agent Martin Baum, circa 1976.

That's exactly what Bernie Brillstein, the garrulous 69-year-old who looks like a Jewish Santa Claus, says. While most of Ovitz's critics refuse to go on the record, Brillstein, in his memorabilia-and-memento-filled office, revels in it. He says, "Mike's problem is that he thinks it's still 1985, when the name Mike Ovitz still scared people." Brillstein pats you on the back, saying, "He probably thinks he can seduce you. Make you see the bright side. To him, showing you his art collection is a warm thing. I've seen it. *It's the coldest thing I've ever seen in my goddamn life.* He would drop dead if he saw my office, because it actually has some personality."

Brillstein's contempt stems from a long-ago dispute that started when Ovitz decided to snub Lorimar Film Entertainment after Brillstein became its head. Since then, often in conjunction with his less voluble partner, Brad Grey (who bought out Brillstein's interest in Brillstein-Grey in 1996), Brillstein has built a reputation as one of the most successful managers in Hollywood. His clients include Brad Pitt, Nicolas Cage, Rob Lowe, and Courteney Cox. "Can I tell you this?" Brillstein says. "I'm really bored talking about Mike Ovitz. I swear I am. You know, whatever he and I had. I wish him luck. Honest to God. But, you know, he's just so *arrogant.*"

And then he cheerfully goes on to ridicule Ovitz's big TV gamble, which he finds per-

Michael Ovitz

[illegible], since much of Brillstein's production costs are laid off on the networks and the studios. "It's like putting 10,000 bucks on a craps table and expecting to walk away with a million," Brillstein says. "Now, if you can afford to lose the $10,000, that's fine. But the odds are you're not going to make it, and you're going to lose the $10,000. One in a billion you make it."

He says this shortly before a staffer rolls in a lunch that rivals Ovitz's sushi, having been prepared in a private kitchen at Brillstein's spacious office, just a short walk from AMG. Lunch service is a big deal among Hollywood big shots—not for these guys, El Pollo Loco. Over carved-turkey sandwiches Brillstein enumerates the reasons why, by his lights, Ovitz and AMG are doomed. Too much overhead. No passion. A bloated 350-person staff, which far outnumbers his own of 60. He continues, "The management business itself is a great business—if he can keep the Yorns happy and develop some young managers. But I don't think that's what he's in it for. I don't think that makes him happy anymore. He wanted to get out of the talent business. That's why he left CAA."

"Well," you ask, "what does he want now?"

"More than anything?"

"Yes."

"To be *Mike Ovitz.*"

You hear this often from the anti-Ovitzians—and this, as they say in the development game, requires the backstory: By the early 90s, Ovitz had built CAA into the most potent agency since Lew Wasserman's MCA ruled Hollywood in the 1950s, thanks largely to Ovitz's ingenious "packaging" strategy. CAA hoarded so much talent that it could leverage the studios much as the Soviets once leveraged Czechoslovakia. If a studio wanted to cast CAA's Tom Cruise in *Rain Man,* he came with other CAA clients, including director Barry Levinson and co-star Dustin Hoffman. Basically, CAA strong-armed the studios. Control the talent, went the theory, and you control Hollywood.

Hunting in packs, poaching and plundering, wearing dark Armani suits and driving dark rich-guy cars, CAA agents made millions. A gargantuan Lichtenstein hung in the vaulted, no doubt intentionally intimidating lobby designed by I. M. Pei. CAA—and Ovitz—ruled by what Ovitz now terms "the Fear Factor." Which was pure Sun Tzu. "When I was at CAA, I took it way too seriously," Ovitz says. "I was a zealot. I was the way that Richard is now."

That would be Richard Lovett, CAA's current managing partner. Lovett, along with the gifted group of Ovitz protégés once known as the "Young Turks"—Bryan Lourd, Kevin Huvane, David O'Connor, and the late Jay Moloney—plus Rick Nicita and Lee Gabler, took over CAA in 1995 after Ovitz bolted for the job at Disney, whose chairman, Michael Eisner, was Ovitz's best friend. (Emphasis on "was.") The Disney deal followed Ovitz's glacially paced and ultimately aborted flirtation with Universal Pictures, which was looking for a new chief. Questioned by the nervous Turks, Ovitz had denied that he was leaving. When news of the doomed romance with Universal began to leak—the biggest secret in Hollywood being *there are no secrets*—Ovitz was left flapping in the wind, a lame duck. The Disney deal was a much-needed out. The Turks felt that Ovitz had betrayed and deceived them. Strange days on Wilshire Boulevard. Ovitz's loyal number two, Ron Meyer, took the Universal job. A source close to Meyer says that he is now upset with himself for ever having been in business with Ovitz. Needless to say, the two are estranged.

The relationship between Eisner and Ovitz imploded within 14 months—Ovitz feeling hamstrung and undermined, Eisner feeling put-upon and annoyed. In 1996 Ovitz received a corporate kiss-off of more than $100 million, then entered what longtime client Crichton calls his "period in the wilderness." Ovitz was adrift and bereft. He stopped taking business calls, stopped making them. He skied on Tuesday afternoons, halfheartedly. "He did retreat," says Crichton. "People who are very good at what they do . . . if something happens to them, as happened to him, it's very startling and very unnerving. He was surprised that he hadn't seen [the Disney mess] coming or understood what was going on, and I think the press assault was quite hard. I've known other people in other contexts who have had that. It's very, very disturbing."

Shaking off his cobwebs, Ovitz tried his hand at a number of ventures which, in one way or another, tanked. He invested $20 million in Livent, producer Garth Drabinsky's theatrical company (*Show Boat, Fosse, Ragtime*). Shortly thereafter, the company went bankrupt, and Drabinsky was charged with 15 counts of fraud. (Ovitz was not involved in any illegalities and says he is "very pleased" with the eventual legal settlement of the case.) Then, teaming with supermarket mogul Ron Burkle, Ovitz tried to bring an N.F.L. franchise to Los Angeles. But he and Burkle clashed. So did Ovitz and financier Eli Broad, who was part of a different L.A. bid group. Ultimately, for reasons having nothing to do with personality, the franchise was awarded to Houston.

Ovitz and Burkle later clashed again over their investment in Scour.com, a controversial entertainment and Napster-like music-exchange Web site, after the two men c[illegible] not agree on a sale price for a pote[illegible] suitor. Burkle, in conjunction with Sc[illegible] founders, held out for roughly $100 mi[illegible] Ovitz, who owned a minority stake, wa[illegible] to sell it for about $50 million and n[illegible] moment too soon, since Scour had cr[illegible] genuine conflict-of-interest concern[illegible] AMG, whose music clients surely dic[illegible] want their material exchanged fre[illegible] charge. (Ovitz notes that file-exchange [illegible] nology did not exist when he first inv[illegible] in Scour.) Ultimately, Scour filed for b[illegible] ruptcy and was sold. Although the two [illegible] ners may eventually recoup their money, [illegible] are unlikely to re-team on future investm[illegible] Neither would confirm rumors that each [illegible] that the other owes him money—millio[illegible] dollars, by some estimates.

Ovitz also was associated with or[illegible] the more notable grifters in recent e[illegible] tainment history: Dana Giacchetto, 38[illegible] pathetically sycophantic money-manage[illegible] the-stars—from DiCaprio to the rock [illegible] Phish—who ended up pleading guilt[illegible] investment-adviser fraud and was rec[illegible] sentenced to 57 months in prison an[illegible] dered to repay clients nearly $10 mi[illegible] Ovitz now says their relationship has [illegible] exaggerated. "I gave him about 200 g[illegible] to invest, which in my life—and please [illegible] take this out of context—is meaningless[illegible] says, adding that Giacchetto actually r[illegible] him money.

At every step of the way Ovitz fel[illegible] with people, often in spectacular fash[illegible] these included David Geffen, the hi[illegible] screenwriter Joe Eszterhas, and the[illegible] mer NBC executive Don Ohlmeyer, [illegible] in *Time* magazine called Ovitz "the [illegible] Christ." Each of Ovitz's enemies has all[illegible] that Ovitz charmed them, then scre[illegible] them. Says one of his high-profile de[illegible] tors, "Anybody that he's touched in s[illegible] way or another comes away disliking [illegible] He says, 'Oh, I've been a tough busi[illegible] man.' Well, that's bullshit. There are a l[illegible] tough businessmen. He creates ill will v[illegible] ever he goes. He's basically a bit of a[illegible] ciopath. . . . Everything is a manipulatio[illegible] He sucks in new people all the time. . . [illegible] every one he doesn't suck in, he sucks i[illegible] other one."

Not everyone agrees. "He's very g[illegible] with people he respects," Scott Rudin [illegible] "If he respects you, he is a tremen[illegible] ally. . . . He's tough . . . and he doesn't [illegible] a lot of prisoners. But in my experi[illegible] with him, he's been tremendously fair[illegible] very helpful."

"My dealings with him have always [illegible] excellent," says Paramount's popular c[illegible] man, Sherry Lansing, a former Ovitz c[illegible] who's currently working on a couple of [illegible] jects with him. "No complaints. None w[illegible] soever." Asked to divine why some o[illegible]

gues feel so differently, Lansing says, "I know. Your experience in life is what xperience is."

s just a weird business," says former .ine Pictures president Mike De Luca, ho suggests that Hollywood's gro- ly incestuous social web may be part problem. "You are going to be in ss with your friends, and you contin- nix personal and professional," says ica. "If you do something for your sional well-being—or for the profes- side of the relationship that is in con- ith the friendship side—you end up ng on toes or burning some bridges."

tz, naturally, takes the same view. "In siness," he says, "there are always nts that are gray. And I don't believe r my intention to do the wrong thing. I sometimes make mistakes. And I think they are life- ning mistakes. And believe that, unfor- ly, a lot of the stuff ny critics say] fits wn purpose. Serves ose for them. I be- hat I worked hon- , but am no more ou. As a journal- u haven't always right. It's just—you we're human be- The human condi- not perfect. We are erfect specimens, f us. We're not ro- And feelings enter You know, I make ns when my head y gut meet. Some- one gets there before the other. And they do, they overshadow how you don't think I'm dishonest. I actually I'm incredibly honest."

continues: "I don't consider anybody, point, an enemy. And that doesn't that they don't consider me an ene- have sort of purged myself of all those s. I would say that I don't hold any- against Michael [Eisner] for that expe- . I take equal responsibility for it. I'm boy. I made a bad decision. I had a partnership with Ron [Meyer] until the nd we got a divorce. And I love him nuch. And how he feels about me is n business. David [Geffen] has hated r 25 years.... He could go on forever. ct if it ever changes, then I'm in for a s problem."

elbows you in the ribs. "That's a

's smiling. You rather doubt that he lly "purged" himself of bile toward his detractors. But then he leans forward, gamely. "What I suggest you do is talk to each of those guys." Leans closer. "I'm *encouraging* you to do that."

And so you call Geffen, who says the subject is too old and tired to discuss. You call Eisner and Meyer. No comment. You call the Turks, who say only that they no longer "feel like piling onto the Ovitz bonfire." The silence is deafening and a bit conspicuous. Two years ago you couldn't get some of these guys to stop talking about Ovitz.

The CAA "boycott," however, remains a going concern, not to mention a curious one. Last year, when the powerful agency announced that it won't work with clients who do business with Ovitz—CAA cited the poaching of Menchel, Robin Williams, and directors Pollack, Scorsese, and Levinson—the old Ovitz voodoo was fingered as the culprit. And maybe it was. But if so, it was employed with samurai stealth. Ovitz denies it. Williams denies it. Menchel denies it. "Never happened," says Menchel. "You can call Robin. Mike never called him, and Mike never called me. Which I was a little mad about." He laughs. "I took it upon myself to call Mike. So, no. Never once. *Never once.*"

Menchel's assertion is echoed by a number of other people supposedly poached by Ovitz, including Crichton and Pollack (both from CAA), each of whom says that he made up his own mind. "I think they took a very unpleasant position," Pollack says of CAA. "They will tell you that Michael gave them no choice in that position. But I was a little bit disturbed by being given, in a sense, parameters of behavior by my own agents. This didn't sit well with me, no matter how much I liked the guys."

The anti-Ovitzians say you're a fool to believe the disclaimers, and maybe you are. Ovitz poaches indirectly, they say, using intermediaries. Still, the outrage seems a bit unwarranted. "The agency business is a poaching business," Menchel says, speaking generally. Many people point out that CAA was built on poaching, and the current CAA brass do it as brilliantly as anyone, stealing actresses Kate Hudson and Monica Bellucci and screenwriter Jim Uhls (*Fight Club*) from other agencies. "If somebody wants to leave you and go someplace else," says 54-year-old William Morris president James Wiatt, "that means that somehow you have either not connected with them or you're not doing a good enough job. And that's your problem."

Ovitz says the CAA boycott is mostly personal, and singles out his former protégé Lovett. "I knew that Richard had to make his own way and separate himself from the father," Ovitz says matter-of-factly. "What bothers me to this day is the constant badmouthing that Richard does to me. When, in essence, I gave this kid from Milwaukee a shot at business." The Turks, Ovitz says, have done "a great job" with CAA—which doesn't tend to mention that its clients, despite the boycott, sometimes work on ATG and APG projects—including television director Michael Dinner (*The Street*) and writer-director Gary Ross (*Pleasantville*). "But I'm disappointed in their behavior toward me, and hopefully someday it will change. I mean, I really do love those guys.

"I handed them 20 years of my life," he continues. "Believe me, I did. They're good guys. I just don't like when the pot is always calling the kettle black, you know? Not just with them, but with any of them. We're a competitive, cutthroat business. It is what it is."

AMG, being a management company, has no burning incentive to steal from agencies. In fact, at least 90 percent of AMG's clients also have agents elsewhere and the system generally works just fine. "Managers and agents work together," says Wiatt, "and every client that is managed by someone should have an agent." He adds, "Maybe



WHEEL MEN
Ovitz and Paul Newman, Long Beach, California, 1990. Newman was one of Ovitz's clients at CAA, but left the agency for ICM in 1997.

Michael Ovitz

I'm naive, but I don't like to wake up in the morning thinking I'm not going to trust somebody . . . So far, the relationship has been O.K., and I haven't had to feel any distrust."

Wiatt knows whereof he speaks, considering that his agency used to represent Tom Clancy, the best-selling author who launched headlines by dumping his longtime agent, Robert Gottlieb, for Ovitz. (AMG *can* sell literary properties to publishers.) Wiatt doesn't seem to blame Ovitz. Neither does Ovitz, who recalls with a kind of simmering bemusement the August *New York Times* article in which Gottlieb claimed that Ovitz had "bamboozled" Clancy.

Clancy, Ovitz, and a source close to Gottlieb say that Ovitz repeatedly tried to work with Gottlieb. But Clancy had grown frustrated with Gottlieb—who, it turns out, was planning to leave William Morris and take his clients, including Clancy, with him. (Shortly thereafter, he did leave, Clancy-less, to form Trident Media Group.) "I'm not a Sabine woman," Clancy says today. "People don't steal me." When asked who had initiated his Ovitz partnership, Clancy replies, "It was my idea."

He adds, "Rob's a good guy. We had a great time together, and he made a lot of money for me. And I made a lot of money for him. And it was time for me to take the next step, and he wasn't the next step. Rob obviously was unhappy about that, and he said things he probably should not have said."

Gottlieb, however, is unrepentant. "Everyone knows that Mike Ovitz poaches from *everyone,*" he says. Asked if he himself ever swipes clients, Gottlieb adamantly says, "No." Pause. "Except for [literary agent] Mort Janklow's clients. Because *he* poaches, too."

You are sitting at home, reading Sun Tzu, when an E-mail from Ovitz pops onto your computer screen, directing you to the Web site of NTT DoCoMo, the mobile-phone unit of a major Japanese telecommunications company. You call up the site, which is filled with postage-stamp-size animated icons and characters—small, dancing porcupines and squirrels—that can be transmitted to cell-phone screens or computer monitors. Evidently, this sort of thing is all the rage in Japan, where millions of people use Internet-linked cell phones to swap E-mails, listen to music, read stock quotes, and amuse one another with small, dancing cartoon cats. DoCoMo is already buying stakes in AT&T and America Online, which it sees as potential partners in "i-mode networking."

Days later, another E-mail from Ovitz, this one directing you to a Web site called Shockwave.com. "Check out this new Flash movie that I downloaded just now," Ovitz writes. "It's great. Bye." Due to your own technical ineptitude, you are unable to download the movie, which no doubt is wonderful. But you know about Shockwave, the on-line-content company which produces cutting-edge Internet animation. What you don't know, exactly, is why Mike Ovitz has E-mailed you about it.

"You look at the sites?" he asks more than once. "Cool, huh? Study them. They'll explain everything."

The E-mails, it turns out, are the advance guard heralding the Big Plan which Ovitz's enemies believe he doesn't have. Ovitz is secretive by disposition. During phone calls, he's been known to ask, "Are you on a secure line?" Now he says—and, again, this is very Sun Tzu—"If people know too much, I don't think that's a good thing, because then they might tend to copy it, or some permutation of it. If they know too little, then when they hear what we are doing, they think that's a good thing."

But, perhaps to refute the naysayers, Ovitz is ready to tip his hand. In the past, on occasion, Ovitz has issued splashy announcements followed by thumb-twiddling silence, as evidenced by the recent stillbirth of his comedy-management department, Artists Comedy Group (ACG)—which, he naturally insists, may yet be born again. (That's another advantage of the Octopus Theory: "If one of the parts doesn't work, it can fall off and grow a new one," according to Cathy Schulman.) But this plan, he says, is rock-solid, and it's rooted in something called Tele-TV, a rather prescient idea he hatched a decade ago with his friend Ivan Seidenberg, then a top executive at Nynex. The firm was run for about two years by Howard Stringer before he became C.E.O. of Sony Corporation of America. The idea was to provide interactive, pay-per-view video content over telephone lines. Ovitz would handle the content and marketing, Seidenberg the technical side. Ultimately, the plan was a little *too* prescient, since phone technology was not yet sophisticated enough to handle "the video curve," as Seidenberg calls it. Tele-TV died, but "Michael gets credit for seeing the future of digital entertainment," says Seidenberg, a kind of wireless genius who now runs Verizon Communications. "He was just 10 years too early. When you look at the AOL–Time Warner merger, that's what we anticipated. Michael sees this clearly. He has a lens that's out two or three years. He's constantly seeing the future ahead of the rest of us."

Cut to 2001, and Ovitz says, after some goading, "Bernie Brillstein can't turn a computer on. He's not in the Digital World. It's not relevant what he thinks. He has an uninformed opinion. Bernie can say whatever he wants. But I've been in business less than 24 months. He's been in busine[ss] years, and he has no theatrical-motion-p[icture] deal like I do with Canal. Never has. [He] thought of it. That part's done. Che[ck] off. Off to the side. Funded, financed, [cov]ering all our overhead. Covers all our d[e]opment and makes 15 movies. It's don[e] the stuff is in production. Television co[m]ny? I had a very strong vision from da[y] that it always is going to deliver *d[ata] goods*"—i.e., programs that can be d[o]loaded onto TVs, computers, or ever[y] phones, and which may well be spons[ored] 1950s-style, by targeted advertisers w[hose] products will be used in the shows.

At another point, nibbling on sliced [an] apple, Ovitz reaches for a folder and g[ives] "Everyone says, 'What are they doing? [Why] is he going so fast?' They don't know [what] they're talking about, because they don't [see] the end product. No one has seen this.

This is a color-coded flowchart, w[hich] has been shown to potential strategic [part]ners, illustrating Ovitz's informed bet[s] over the next 36 months most forms o[f] tertainment and information—news, sp[orts] animation, movies—will flow into ho[mes] through a single "interface" tailored to [each] consumer's tastes. The technology is al[ready] here. All that's missing, Ovitz reasons, [is] content. That's where he comes in.

Again and again, as you sigh with b[ore]ment, Ovitz details how this techno[logy] will work. Finally, mercifully, he dispa[tches] you to Orange County, home of Broad[com], the world's leading provider of broad[band] communication chips, those tiny doo[dads] which control the universe—or, at l[east] your computer and your cable box. [There] you are led to two genial, terrifyingl[y] telligent young techies, Jason and Da[rren] Jason and Darren, while casually tossin[g] terms such as "demodulation" and "[MPEG] decompression," show you their brand[-new] 7100 chip, which will hit the market[s] year. More important, they show y[ou] standard-issue television flickering wit[h] image of Pamela Anderson and her l[ate]intensive bosom flouncing through an[] sode of *Baywatch.* The image is frame[d] another video screen, whose vivid, "s[uper] quality" graphics offer you, among [other] things, sports scores, chat rooms, and [links] to e-commerce Web sites. When a raf[t] pears on *Baywatch,* Darren grabs a re[mote] moves a cursor onto the raft, and c[licks] The raft freezes. At this point, the v[ideo] could be directly linked to a local spo[rting] goods store that sells rafts.

Glimmers of this technology hav[e] ready appeared in the marketp[lace] with excitable sports fans running bet[s] their TVs and their laptops, voting o[n] action. The 7100 chip will merge your l[aptop] computer with your TV, for a minimal

han run amok. You'll be seeing this
logy in stores by Christmas, and by
com's way of thinking it's destined to
e the industry standard, as ubiquitous
Station. (In fact, it's just another step
"the intelligent home," in which your
ur phone, your computer, your oven,
ur refrigerator will communicate with
other, finally allowing you to defrost
via your cell phone.) Viewers will
pay the sorts of flat rates favored by
s-phone companies, and the hardware
relatively uniform.

hen they're delivering wireless ser-
what differentiates them?" Ovitz asks,
nswers, Whoever gives you "the best
and the most goodies."

tz's company will make the goodies.
he next five years, experts predict,
TV connections will increase tenfold,
million, creating a market worth as
as $100 billion.

ause ATG is specifically geared to-
igital-content production, Ovitz is bet-
at he can fly beneath the radar and be

Also to Ovitz's advantage, he and Sei-
g say, is the fact that ATG can provide
twork quality" content that American
s demand—unlike failed i-film compa-
uch as pop.com and pseudo.com,
weak material couldn't keep pace
e medium.

tz friend and Loudcloud chairman
Andreessen, 29, the man who co-
l Netscape, thinks Ovitz has a good
succeeding. "A lot of these dot-coms
t have anywhere near the resources in
of creative talent or finances or distri-
that he's going to bring to bear," he
He's in a different league."

Television president Leslie Moonves
a supporter. "When Mike Ovitz puts
nd to something, he generally suc-
at it.... I believe in the strategy of ...
ng at every hole."

hen's your deadline?" Ovitz asks,
han once. He repeatedly says that a
al is in the works.

fear that you are being played. You
what Michael Crichton told you
his longtime friend and agent: "He
tell me these stories about how he
anipulated something to happen,
entually I said to him, 'O.K., Mike.
are very funny stories and you're
killful at getting people to do what
ant them to do. But let's you and I
in agreement. I don't like to be ma-
ted. I can usually see it coming. So
not going to do it with me.' And, of
, he would. And I'd say, 'Didn't we
his discussion?' Eventually I realized
at's his nature, and I've come to ac-
. I mean, I'm very fond of the guy,
t the same time I think no matter
ng you've known him you've got to
be slightly careful about what he's saying to you. That's just who he is."

But Ovitz assures you the Big Deal really is happening, "just not in time for your article."

You make a simple request of Ovitz to show you how he does it so you can see him in action. *I'm a big star looking for representation,* you say. *Sell me.*

Ovitz fidgets for a moment, which is uncharacteristic. Finally he says, "That's really Rick's thing. You should ask Rick to do it. He's really good at it."

Ovitz doesn't do that anymore. He's no longer in the service industry, he seems to say. He's a Captain of Industry. It's been this way for years, actually, even since the late CAA days, when he began swinging meaty corporate deals with Matsushita and Coca-Cola. After growing up in a $6,000 house in the Valley, taking over Hollywood, then losing his way, he now believes, it seems, that AMG is his means to this crowning end. "It's going to take three to five years for this business to marinate properly," he says. "I'll know within three years from the day we started if it's got a shot to do what I'd like it to do. We're not there yet. Do I feel good about it now? Yeah, I do.... I can't do it any faster and do it organically. I need a building block. I need a foundation. And this is it."

He's been doing a lot of thinking lately, mostly about "the larger context," as he calls it. By this he means, in part, his own legacy—which one top agent describes as a combination of Nixonian and Clintonian: "Seemingly tragic, but then, when everyone counts him out, he comes back."

"I was thinking about it today," Ovitz says. "There was a thing in *Business Week* over the weekend about presidents and what they have gone through over the last 40 years. Every one of them has made a misstep. Nixon made a misstep. Ford made a misstep. Kennedy made a misstep. They all made missteps. It's part of the game." This weighs on him heavily, gives him pause. He says, "The good news is: when I get an idea and I want to do something, I don't stop. The bad news is: when I get an idea and I want to do something, I don't stop. It's created many opportunities for me, and it's created an equal amount of problems." Like what? "People don't like tenacious people."

In some ways, Ovitz is vexed by his history—including the case of Jay Moloney, his former protégé at CAA, who, after battling manic depression and drug addiction, committed suicide at the age of 35 in November 1999. Ovitz tried many times to rescue his former assistant, calling him regularly and even staging interventions. Ovitz admits today that he knew Moloney had emotional problems "five years before I left CAA," but that he "turned his head because Jay was so talented."

This introspection extends in a more generalized way, even to his enemies. "Everybody has an ax to grind with me, and I can't figure out why," he says. "Maybe because when I was an agent, we were very competitive. And to do what I did, I probably left a lot of people behind, and I'm sure they weren't thrilled about it." He stares you dead in the eyes. "I probably was a little too aggressive. I've learned a lot. I'm older now. I was 26 when I started, and I was impatient and restless and hungry. And I wanted to win. I wanted to be the best. And I probably stretched the rules, and probably wasn't as much of a gentleman as I should have been."

For the life of him, though, Ovitz can't fathom why everyone writes about his dark side but never the light—his art, for instance. At his striking Georgian-style house in Brentwood Park, you have a drink at Ovitz's bar, whose walls are covered with photographs of Ovitz and Scorsese, Ovitz and Spielberg, Ovitz and Bill Clinton. You take in the Frank Stellas and Jasper Johnses, the Rothko and the Picassos, the Ming Dynasty furniture, and, upstairs—after you've devoured another free meal and an impossibly expensive bottle of wine—the Rembrandt (one of five he owns) next to Ovitz's bed. Then there's the $25 million he donated to build a medical center at U.C.L.A., his alma mater. When you ask the dean of the U.C.L.A. Medical School, Dr. Gerald Levey, if Ovitz is just another Hollywood Rich Guy throwing money at a charity, Levey replies, "As God is my witness, when I need him, he is always there. We talk several times a week."

Not that he's getting soft or anything. He's busily preparing for an impending Writers Guild strike, which promises to punish Hollywood, and his "hobby," securing an N.F.L. franchise for Los Angeles, remains an active project. And he hasn't *completely* jettisoned the whole Sun Tzu thing—best evidenced, you tell him, by his soft Mike Ovitz Voice, which always makes *you* go to *him.* "Not in the book," he says, laughing. "Not in the book! I've read the book 20 times. And the funny thing is, anytime somebody meets me, I don't know what they're expecting, but it's not who I am." He's got another "huge" meeting this afternoon, and he's been preparing for weeks. He's so nervy right now he's virtually percolating. He invites you to watch his karate workout. Mike Burns nixes the idea, perhaps wisely. Minutes later, Ovitz is gone. The hostess bows. You never see a check, and you never will. Your crispy tempura, your cheerful waiter, your entire dining experience—all his. He owns the place. □

CREDITS

FASHION

Cover: Nicole Kidman's Maggie Norris bustier and skirt by special order from Bergdorf Goodman. **Catherine Deneuve's** Yves Saint Laurent shoes from Jeffrey New York, N.Y.C.; for Harry Winston sapphire-and-diamond drop earrings set in platinum and sapphire ring set in platinum with pavé diamonds, call 1-800-988-4110; vintage embroidered coat on chaise by Norma Kamali, from OMO Norma Kamali, N.Y.C. **Meryl Streep's** Michael Kors sweater from Michael Kors, N.Y.C.; Giorgio Armani skirt from Giorgio Armani boutiques nationwide; for hosiery by Donna Karan, call 1-800-342-7070; Jil Sander shoes from Jeffrey New York, N.Y.C. For **Gwyneth Paltrow's** Jean Paul Gaultier Couture dress, call 011-331-42-97-48-12; Prada shoes from Barneys New York, N.Y.C. **Cate Blanchett's** Christian Dior suit by special order from Christian Dior boutiques worldwide; Christian Dior shirt from Christian Dior, N.Y.C. **Kate Winslet's** Gianfranco Ferré coat from Gianfranco Ferré, N.Y.C.; Michael Kors dress from Michael Kors, N.Y.C. **Vanessa Redgrave's** Catherine Walker coat from Catherine Walker, London; Robert Clergerie boots from Barneys New York, N.Y.C. **Chloë Sevigny's** Christian Dior dress from Christian Dior, N.Y.C. For **Sophia Loren's** hosiery by Wolford, call 1-800-WOLFORD; for Harry Winston diamond necklace with 50-carat yellow-diamond pendant, diamond chandelier earrings set in platinum, diamond cluster bracelet, and 19-carat yellow-diamond ring set in platinum, call 1-800-988-4110; coat on chaise by Christian Dior, from Christian Dior, N.Y.C.

Page 32: Yuen Wo Ping's tank top by Calvin Klein Underwear, from Macy's stores nationwide.

Page 110: Wendy Stark Morrissey styled by Christine Hahn; all clothing by Giorgio Armani, from Giorgio Armani boutiques nationwide.

Page 184: Alan Hergott styled by Jeanne Yang for Cloutier; sweater by Nicole Farhi, from Barneys New York, N.Y.C.; jeans by A.P.C., from A.P.C., N.Y.C.; shoes by Joseph Fenestrier, from Barneys New York, N.Y.C.

Page 208: Willie Fulgear styled by Pauline Leonard for Cloutier.

Page 333: Katharine Towne's Alberta Ferretti dress from selected Saks Fifth Avenue stores.

Page 336: David Cross and **Bob Odenkirk** styled by Daniel Caudill for Célestine; all clothing from Decades, L.A.

Page 338: Bud Cort styled by Jeanne Yang for Cloutier; T-shirt and suit by Giorgio Armani, from Giorgio Armani, L.A.; ring from Barakat, Beverly Hills.

Pages 350–51: Rory, Macaulay, and **Kieran Culkin's** pajamas from Harrods Knightsbridge, London.

Page 353: Raquel Welch's Tom Ford for Yves Saint Laurent tuxedo suit from the Yves Saint Laurent boutique, N.Y.C.

Pages 354–55: All clothing from United American Costume, L.A.; L'Wren Scott for the United Talent Agency.

Pages 356–57: Robert Downey Jr.'s Imitation of Christ coat from Barneys New York, N.Y.C.; Costume National Homme shirt from Costume National, L.A.; Calvin Klein Collection pants from selected Saks Fifth Avenue stores; vintage boots from Kaufman's Army & Navy, N.Y.C.; Edward Jowdy for Art Partner.

Page 358: For **Ed Harris's** Helmut Lang T-shirt and jeans, go to www.helmutlang.com; L'Wren Scott for the United Talent Agency.

Page 359: Ellen Burstyn's TSE sweater from selected TSE boutiques; for Van Cleef & Arpels earrings, call 1-800-VCA-5797; L'Wren Scott for the United Talent Agency.

Pages 360–61: All J. C. Penney clothing from J. C. Penney stores nationwide; Roberta Wagner for Célestine.

Pages 364–65: Ron Eldard's DKNY jacket from DKNY, N.Y.C. **Dylan Baker's** Levi's Vintage Clothing jacket from Selvedge, N.Y.C.

Pages 366–67: Benicio Del Toro's Costume National shirt from Costume National stores nationwide; Gucci shoes from Gucci stores nationwide; L'Wren Scott for the United Talent Agency.

Pages 372–73: Kip Pardue's Calvin Klein Underwear T-shirt from Barneys New York, L.A.; Polo Ralph Lauren cords from Polo Ralph Lauren stores nationwide. **Sanaa Lathan's** Marcel Marongiu blouse from Jane, N.Y.C.; Earl Jean jeans from Barneys New York, L.A.; Stephane Kélian shoes from all Stephane Kélian boutiques, N.Y.C. **Shannyn Sossamon's** Polo Ralph Lauren shirt from Polo Ralph Lauren stores nationwide; Rampage skirt from Rampage stores nationwide. **Monet Mazur's** Marc Jacobs top and shoes from the Marc Jacobs women's store, N.Y.C.; Bella Dahl pants from Lisa Kline, L.A. **Desmond Harrington's** Marc Jacobs shirt from the Marc Jacobs men's store, N.Y.C.; Ralph Lauren pants from Bloomingdale's stores nationwide; Stephane Kélian shoes from all Stephane Kélian boutiques, N.Y.C. **Johnny Knoxville's** Dickies pants from K Mart stores nationwide; for Chuck Taylor sneakers, from Converse, call 1-800-554-2667. **Amy Smart's** Alberta Ferretti dress from selected Saks Fifth Avenue stores; Edmundo Castillo shoes from Neiman Marcus stores nationwide.

Page 375: Laura Linney's Ralph Lauren Collection dress from selected Polo Ralph Lauren stores; for Harry Winston ring and earrings, call 1-800-988-4110.

Page 376: Lucas Black's James Perse tank top from Maxfield, L.A.; for CK Calvin Klein Jeans Kids pants, call 1-800-294-7978. For **Hallie Kate Eisenberg's** Tommy Hilfiger T-shirt and jeans, call 1-800-866-6922. **Jonathan Lipnicki's** American Eagle Outfitters T-shirt from American Eagle Outfitters stores nationwide; for Tommy Hilfiger shorts, call 1-800-866-6922; for Skechers sneakers, go to www.skechers.com. For **J. Michael Moncrief's** Roots sweatshirt, go to www.roots.com; for CK Calvin Klein Jeans Kids T-shirt and cords, call 1-800-294-7978. **Jamie Bell's** James Perse T-shirt from Bergdorf Goodman, N.Y.C.; for CK Calvin Klein Jeans Kids pants, call 1-800-294-7978; for Timberland boots, go to www.timberland.com.

Page 377: Haley Joel Osment's Ralph Lauren Childrenwear shirt and pants from Polo Ralph Lauren stores nationwide.

Page 378: Leslee Dart's Carolina Herrera gown from selected Saks Fifth Avenue stores. **Pat Kingsley's** Giorgio Armani jacket, pants, and top from Giorgio Armani, N.Y.C.; Tamotsu pants from selected Saks Fifth Avenue stores. **Lois Smith's** Gianfranco Ferré Forma jacket and top from selected Saks Fifth Avenue stores; for Harry Winston jewelry, call 1-800-988-4110.

Page 382: Alexandra Keeling for Artists by Timothy Priano.

Page 388: For **Kate Hudson's** Barbour boots, call 1-800-338-3474; Calvin Klein Underwear pantie from Bloomingdale's stores nationwide.

Pages 396–97: L'Wren Scott for the United Talent Agency; Abel Villarreal for Bullpen.

BEAUTY AND GROOMING

Cover: Manicures by Deborah Lippmann for lippmanncollection.com, Gina Viviano for Cloutier, and the Untouchables, U.K., for Creative Nail Products. Madeleine Cofano for L'Atelier N.Y.C.; Danilo for Physique; Giovanni Giuliano for Célestine/Prive Salon; Campbell McAuley for Art Mix; Serena Radaelli for Cloutier/Graham Webb; Dan Sharp for the Agency; Kevyn Aucoin for Trade; Kate Lee for Forward, London/Chanel; Dick Page for Jed Root, Inc.; Ignazio Sulas for Inspiration.

Pages 32: Yuen Wo Ping's grooming by Kara Yoshimoto for Artists by Timothy Priano/Makeup Forever.

Page 102: Amy Fine Collins's hair by Yves Durif; makeup by Evy Argyreas.

Page 110: Jane Sarkin's hair by Maury Hopson; makeup by Sandy Linter for Peter Coppola. Wendy Stark Morrissey's hair and makeup by Kat James for Garren New York.

Page 184: Alan Hergott's grooming by Lori Jean Swanson for Cloutier.

Page 208: Willie Fulgear's grooming by Lori Jean Swanson for Cloutier.

Page 333: Danilo for Physique; Christy Coleman for the Agency.

Page 336: David Cross's and **Bob Odenkirk's** grooming by Gunn Espegard for Célestine.

Page 338: Bud Cort's hair by Janice Bohn for Amato Salon; grooming by Kendra Richards for Cloutier.

Page 340: Ted Demme's grooming by Barbara Farman for Cloutier.

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Page 352: Richard Pryor's hair by Olivier for Jonathan; grooming by Wanda Taylor.

Page 353: Teddy Antolin for Beauty & Photo/John Frieda; Francesca Tolot for Cloutier/I Nuovi Cosmetics.

Pages 354–55: Damon, Marlon, Shawn, and **Keenen Ivory Wayans's** hair by Linda Villalobos; grooming by Rebecca DeHerrera.

Pages 356–57: Robert Downey Jr.'s hair by Gabriel Georgiou for Art Mix/Tigi; grooming by Sharon Gault for Luxe/Nars.

Page 358: Ed Harris's grooming by Eric Barnard for Cloutier.

Page 359: Eric Barnard for Cloutier.

Pages 360–61: Hair by Cheryl Marks for Cloutier; makeup by Lutz for Art Mix and by Kate Shorter; grooming by Loa Blasucci, Kendra Richards for Cloutier, and Jeanne Townsend for Célestine.

Pages 364–65: Grooming by Sara Johnson for Sarah Laird.

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ges 372–73: Kip Pardue's, Desmond ırrington's, and **Johnny Knoxville's** grooming Christy Coleman for the Agency. Danilo for sique; Kimberly Kimble for Agency & Group; llier Strong for Cloutier.
ge 374: Rheanne White for Artists by Timothy ano.
ge 375: Enzo Laera and Kim Carrillo for ły Casey.
ge 376: Debra Ferullo for Artists by Timothy ano.
ge 378: Sandy Linter for Peter Coppola; ozé for Firozé Nail and Skincare.
ge 382: Sylvia Viau for Cloutier.
ge 383: Marqué for Ken Barboza; Giana Johnette for Artists by Timothy Priano.
ge 388: Recine for the Wall Group; Denise ırkey for Club Monaco Cosmetics.
ge 394: See credit for page 32.
ges 396–97: Alan Cumming's manicure Cecily Carrington for Beauty & Photo. nilo for Physique; Jeff Judd for Luxe.
ges 398–400: Art Garfunkel's and **ck Nicholson's** grooming by Meghan McClain Art Mix/Nars. Enzo Angileri for Cloutier/Wella tex Wellness; Jo Strettell for Cloutier.

HOTOGRAPHS AND MISCELLANY

ver: London production by Jo Matthews.
ecial thanks to Timothy Perkins, James path, and Tristam Steinberg. *Portrait of a Lady* irtesy of Mark Murray Fine Paintings, N.Y.C.; *trait of Mrs. V,* by John White Alexander, d *Portrait of the Countess Clary Aldringen,* John Singer Sargent, courtesy of the schl & Adler Galleries, N.Y.C.; Sarouk Persian courtesy of Galerie Shabab, N.Y.C.; French Deco bergère chair, circa 1920, courtesy Karl Kemp & Assoc. Antiques, N.Y.C.; French ı-century fireplace and screen courtesy A&R Asta Ltd., N.Y.C.; wall upholstery Delon Freres Inc., N.Y.C. Stefan Beckman Exposure N.Y.
ge 40: From the Everett Collection.
ge 48: From the Lester Glassner llection/Neal Peters.
ge 102: Top, courtesy of William Frye.
ge 116: Top, courtesy of *W* magazine.
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ge 178: By Elbert McGran Jackson/Wood er Gallery/PictureQuest (top left); Neal ston/Corbis (April 3); Ryan McVay/ otoDisc/PictureQuest (4); courtesy of MoMA/ kett/Jeff Koons (5); from C Squared dios/PhotoDisc/PictureQuest (8); by Chris niels/Corbis (13); Steven Starr/Stock ston/PictureQuest (15); courtesy of El Museo Barrio (18); from Reuters NewMedia /Corbis (21); by Ewing Galloway/Index Stock agery/PictureQuest (26); Rachel into/Rainbow/PictureQuest (27); David eet/American Ballet Theatre (30).
ge 180: Clockwise from top left, courtesy Vincent Fremont Enterprises, Inc.; courtesy of Winstar Cinema; courtesy of Universal Studios; by Robert DiScalfani/Photonica.
Page 182: Bottom right, from Photofest.
Page 184: Bottom, all courtesy of Oliver Boberg and the Paul Morris Gallery.
Page 188: Bottom left, from Archive Photos/PictureQuest.
Page 190: Left, top to bottom, from CMCD/PhotoDisc/PictureQuest, by Will Shilling/Image Direct, Gabe Palacio/Comedy Central, courtesy of MTV; right, top to bottom, courtesy of CBS, by Monty Brinton/CBS, Michael Yarish/CBS.
Page 194: From Photofest.
Page 196: Clockwise from top, from Culver Pictures, from the Jay Espy Collection/Shooting Star, from the Everett Collection.
Page 198: Top, from Photofest; bottom, from the Everett Collection.
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Page 208: Props styled by Heidi Tortorici for Cloutier; inset from NBC/Globe Photos.
Page 210: © by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.
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Pages 222–34: All from MPTV.
Page 236: From TimePix.
Page 257: From MPTV.
Page 258: Courtesy of the Cinerama Adventure Collection (logo), courtesy of Pacific Theatres Archives/Cinerama Inc. (audience), from S.S. Archives/Shooting Star (screen).
Page 260: From Shooting Star.
Page 266: Left, courtesy of Larry Smith of the Cinerama Preservation Society, Inc.; right, courtesy of David Strohmaier/The Cinerama Adventure Collection.
Page 273: From MGM Publicity/The Cinerama Adventure Collection.
Page 276: Top, from Globe Photos; bottom, from the Neal Peters Collection.
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Page 284: Photograph from the collection of Angela Barton; inset courtesy of the Estate of Richard Gully.
Page 286: Top and center, from the collection of Angela Barton; bottom, courtesy of the Estate of Richard Gully.
Page 288: Top, courtesy of the Estate of Richard Gully; others from the collection of Angela Barton.
Page 294: Left, courtesy of the Estate of Richard Gully; others from the collection of Angela Barton.
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Page 308: Both from TimePix.
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Page 338: Props styled by Peter Gargagliano.
Page 340: Bottom center, by Mitchell Gerber/Corbis; right, by Jonathan Becker.
Page 344: From Archive Photos/PictureQuest (Houdini), by Peter Borsari (Brentwood, Malibu), Myron J. Dorf/The Stock Market (dove), John Dudak/Phototake/PictureQuest (orange food), from FourLegs Photography (Marlboro, video), by Janet Gough/Celebrity Photo (Ribisi), Roger Karnbad/Celebrity Photo (Alley, Short), from Ron Kimball Photography (Porsche), by Terry Qing/FPG (blood), Miranda Shen/Celebrity Photo (Stern), from Stockbyte/PictureQuest (frequent flier), by Frank Teti/Neal Peters (Dickinson), courtesy of Volvo (Volvo), by William Whitehurst/The Stock Market (chef).
Page 346: Left, clockwise from top left, by Nina Prommer/Globe Photos, Alec Michael/Globe Photos, Vinnie Zuffante/Star File, from Star File, by Fitzroy Barrett/Globe Photos, Walter McBride/Retna, from Culver Pictures, by Barry Talesnick/Retna, Bill Davila/Retna, Joseph Marzullo/Retna, Henry McGee/Globe Photos. Right, clockwise from top right, from Jim Sugar/Corbis, by Gilbert Flores/Celebrity Photo, David Young-Wolff/PhotoEdit/PictureQuest, Jeffrey Mayer/Star File, Michael Waine/The Stock Market, R. Meigneux/Imapress/Globe Photos, Gregg Gawlowski/Photo 20-20/PictureQuest, Mitchell Gerber/Corbis, Charles and Josette Lenars/Corbis, Thomas Perdew/Focus Group/PictureQuest, from the Neal Peters Collection.
Pages 354–55: Dog from Brian McMillan's Animal Actors.
Pages 364–65: Production by Pascale Gailland for 5th & Sunset Productions.
Pages 368–69: Rick Floyd for Magnet NY.
Page 371: Production by Pascale Gailland for 5th & Sunset Productions.
Pages 372–73: Production by Joy Asbury for Brian Howard for Production.
Page 375: Carlos Mota for Judy Casey.
Page 376: Production by Joy Asbury for Brian Howard for Production; for Pacific Cycle L.L.C. bicycles and scooters, go to www.pacific-cycle.com.
Pages 382–85, 392–95, and 398–400: Rick Floyd for Magnet NY.
Page 413: From Hamilton.
Pages 414–15: Left to right, from Globe Photos, from the Wisconsin Center for Film and Theater Research, from Hamilton, from Keystone/Archive Photos/Hulton Getty.
Pages 418–19: Bottom left and bottom right, from the Everett Collection.
Pages 420–21: Insets, top, from Photofest; bottom, from Hamilton.
Page 425: From the Everett Collection.
Page 436: Clockwise from top left, by Lisa Rose/Globe Photos, from Corbis Bettmann, from Corbis Bettmann, by Dave Benett/Alpha/Globe Photos, Paul Smith/Feature Flash/Retna, from Photofest, by Gilbert Flores/Celebrity Photo, Janet Gough/Celebrity Photo, from Globe Photos, by Tricia Meadows/Globe Photos, Roger Karnbad/Celebrity Photo, Janet Gough/Celebrity Photo.

CORRECTION:
On page 217 of the March issue, Julianne Moore's beige sandals are by Edmundo Castillo, from Geraldine, N.Y.C.

Michael Lutin tells Aries to stay in denial



ARIES MARCH 21–APRIL 19

Julia Stiles

Socially you're a little off-track at the moment. You're probably feeling goofy inside, and as a result you're putting on a happy face and acting even more boisterous and blustery than usual in an effort to compensate for your self-perceived inadequacies. But that will pass. An approaching 9th-house transit should revive your thirst for learning and adventure as well as your ability to shrug off dark thoughts, and that will put you a full cut above everybody else. Just don't come off like a know-it-all preacher. You haven't cornered the market on truth—yet.



Penélope Cruz

TAURUS APRIL 20–MAY 20

With Venus, your ruling planet, going retrograde in your solar 12th house and Saturn crawling along between the fixed star Algol and the Pleiades, a wild and potentially taboo sexual encounter may be the last thing you have the energy for, even if, ironically enough, that's all you seem to think about when you're alone. You won't go to hell for having an impure thought now and then, as long as you remember to consider how you would feel were you to act on some of those primitive desires. On the other hand, you might try to turn your mind to more heavenly pursuits.



Roger Ebert

GEMINI MAY 21–JUNE 21

You should be dropping to your knees every five minutes and thanking God that Saturn is about to leave your solar 12th house and will stay the hell out of there for another 28 years. You will soon have much more control over your life and will finally be able to dump the guilt trip that's been driving you batty. Until that moment comes, though, you will need every bit of inner strength and faith you can muster as Mars makes an exciting but irritating pass through your 7th house and certain meanies try to prey on your kindness. War is coming.



Meryl Streep

CANCER JUNE 22–JULY 22

If you're a Cancer, you're supposed to know on which shelf in the refrigerator the grape jelly can be found and in which closet the fresh towels are located. At this bizarre point in your life, however, you're lucky even to know where you live. For some strange reason, it has been utterly impossible for you to make any long-term commitments. What mysterious anxiety has hindered you from putting your money where your mouth is? And can you really go on blaming Saturn for all this waffling over your goals? Or are you just scared you won't be around to realize any of them?



Jack Warner

LEO JULY 23–AUG. 22

Once you get it through your head what a dumb waste of precious time it is to try to convince thickheaded control freaks and fuzzy-minded space cadets how valuable you really are, you will finally be able to walk away from oppression and tyranny. You have to be thoroughly fed up, however, to reach that point. Maybe when Saturn leaves your midheaven and Mars touches Pluto in your 5th house, you will turn to the only true source of joy: creativity. If that doesn't work, you can always waste even more time freaking out over the grief you get from your kids.



Ryan Phillippe

VIRGO AUG. 23–SEPT. 22

While it looks as if the year ahead could definitely be a stressful one, the good news is that a culminating Saturn will bring the opportunity either to establish yourself professionally or to re-invent yourself and jazz up a flagging career. You always manage to come off as cool as a cucumber, but what the public will never see is the boiling pot on your kitchen stove, which is a perfect metaphor for the current state of your personal life. Mars and Pluto are stirring up your primitive needs while a retrograde Venus is making your sex life difficult. And you thought it was all over.



Gene Autry

LIBRA SEPT. 23–OCT. 23

The retrograde motion of your ruling planet, Venus, gives rise to many days of extreme weirdness both in your place of business and your friends and family, and it will probably take until the end of the week in April to straighten things out. There's somebody who doesn't play the game any longer, mainly because he or she is restless but can't it. As usual, the solution to interpersonal problems can be found only few agonizingly heavy, deep, and real conversations. With the raging buzz you've got going now, that should be a snap.

Louise Brooks

SCORPIO OCT. 24–

The last thing you ever want to do is give anybody the impression that you're hungry or grabby. Nothing turns people off like needines pendence. At a time when both your ruling planets conjoin in house and Pluto begins its five-month retrograde trip, you certain want to appear to be groping around desperately in the dark for piece of security. Even if you have to make like Scarlett O'Hara and curtains off the window in order to sew yourself an outfit, when into the bank, make sure you look like a billion dollars.

Brad Pitt

SAGITTARIUS NOV. 22–DEC. 21

There is no question that you are going to have to slow down. It's ju a matter of whether you are going to do so willingly and with full c ness of your actions or whether you are going to do the brick-wall land flat on your back. If this month's retrograde motion of Plut convince you that Rome wasn't built in a day, the station of Mar May certainly will. By all means, continue exploring your options a give up your commitment to personal growth. Just try once in a wh in at least one decent night's sleep.



Diane Keaton

CAPRICORN DEC. 22–

During major 12th-house transits, you must take special ca get carried away either by blind hope or by dark despair. After a usually lies somewhere in between. Some Capricorns live out their w actually believing that, compared with *their* accursed existences, Pea was a day at the beach. There is always some wisdom in your pe however, especially when you sit down and actually count the n times your wrist has been slapped by this very punitive universe (o ten in the form of your mother).

Ida Lupino

AQUARIUS JAN. 20–FEB. 18

Those people who have that one special person in their lives may i deed be the luckiest people in the world, but when the human bu depend on or the groups and organizations you belong to are mak ulcers kick up, you've got to wonder why you need anybody at all. house transits of Mars are especially significant for Aquarians, be your friendships, as well as the goals you set for yourself, are in a state of change. Remember this: political games are played in every in the land—not just in Washington, D.C.



Spike Lee

PISCES FEB. 19–MA

Changing your professional life as profoundly as you are yi do requires gargantuan effort, mainly because you'd prefer to get u covers and hide out. That can't happen now. When an exalted M es a stationary Pluto in your solar midheaven, all eyes are on you, every move is painfully scrutinized. There is no place you can r fore, and no magical person you can marry or independent jobo choose that will free you from one inexorable truth: everybody ans higher authority. Even you.

To hear more about what's happening in your horoscope—and everyone else's—listen to Michael Lutin weekly by calling 1-900-28V-FA on a Touch-Tone phone. Cost: $1.95 per minute. If you are under 18, you need parental permission.

CARRIE FISHER



Carrie Fisher has Hollywood running through her veins, from her showbiz parents, Debbie Reynolds and Eddie Fisher, to her iconic role in *Star Wars* to her current career as a modern-day Dorothy Parker. With the success of her latest screenwriting effort, *These Old Broads*, Fisher reflects on her very questionable driving skills, her crush on Cary Grant, and Shirley MacLaine's handbag

What is your idea of perfect happiness?
I don't think there is any such thing.

What is your greatest fear?
A bad death . . . fast or slow.

Which historical figure do you most identify with?
Mad King George's psychiatrist.

Which living person do you most admire?
David Spade's assistant.

What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?
My driving skills.

What is your greatest extravagance?
Antique jewelry and medieval stained glass.

On what occasion do you lie?
When I have been high.

What do you dislike most about your appearance?
My head. It looks like either an egg with hair or a bowl of oatmeal with features.

Which living person do you most despise?
A certain Republican . . . who will remain nameless.

What or who is the greatest love of your life?
Cary Grant.

When and where were you happiest?
In my manic highs, which are too numerous to mention.

Which talent would you most like to have?
Dieting.

What do you consider your greatest achievement?
My child and certain areas of my personality.

What is your current state of mind?
New York.

If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?
My inability to have romantic relationships.

If you could change one thing about your family, what would it be?
More kids like the one I got, and my father's book.

If you were to die and come back as a person or thing, what do you think it would be?
A stone, a leaf, or an unfound door.

If you could choose what to come back as, what would it be?
Shirley MacLaine's handbag.

What is your most treasured possession?
My Mueller Frères lamp.

What do you regard as the lowest depth of misery?
My psychotic episode, or dinner with a conservative.

Where would you like to live?
London.

What is your favorite occupation?
Conversationalist.

What is your most marked characteristic?
Large life.

What do you most value in your friends?
A well-stocked medicine cabinet.

Who are your favorite writers?
Salman Rushdie, Bruce Wagner, George Eliot.

Who are your heroes in life?
My mother.

What is it that you most dislike?
Pain and aging.

How would you like to die?
Morphine home care.

What is your motto?
"Fuck that shit."

ILLUSTRATION BY RISKO



DRI-FIT SEAMLESS TANK

Catwalking for the Cause

eLUXURY.com, AIDS Project Los Angeles (APLA), and *Vanity Fair* got together on January 11 for an evening of cocktails, philanthropy, and fashion. Over 300 guests gathered at the Chateau Marmont in Hollywood for a silent auction of products from eLUXURY.com while models showed off Donna Karan and La Perla fashions featured on the Web site. APLA received over $15,000 as a result of the event.





Cynthia Garrett of "Later Today" and Craig E. Thompson of APLA; Guests mingle at the Chateau Marmont.

Longines Presents *Dinner Rush*

Producers, directors and cast members of Bob Giraldi's *Dinner Rush* joined more than 400 VIP guests of Longines, the Official Watch of the Telluride Film Festival, and *Vanity Fair* at an exclusive screening of the film at the Writers Guild Theater in Los Angeles. Giraldi's engaging drama follows the story of an Italian eatery in the TriBeCa neighborhood of New York City, as it evolves into an urban hotspot.





Top, left to right: **Charles Villoz of Longines, *Dinner Rush*'s Bob Giraldi, Janet Cerrutti and Abe Shamash of Longines; Polly Draper of *Dinner Rush*; *Bottom, left to right:* Alex Corrado, John Corbett and Edoardo Ballerini of *Dinner Rush*; *Dinner Rush* writers Brian Kalata and Rick Shaughnessy.**





Cole Haan and the Roundabout Theatre Company

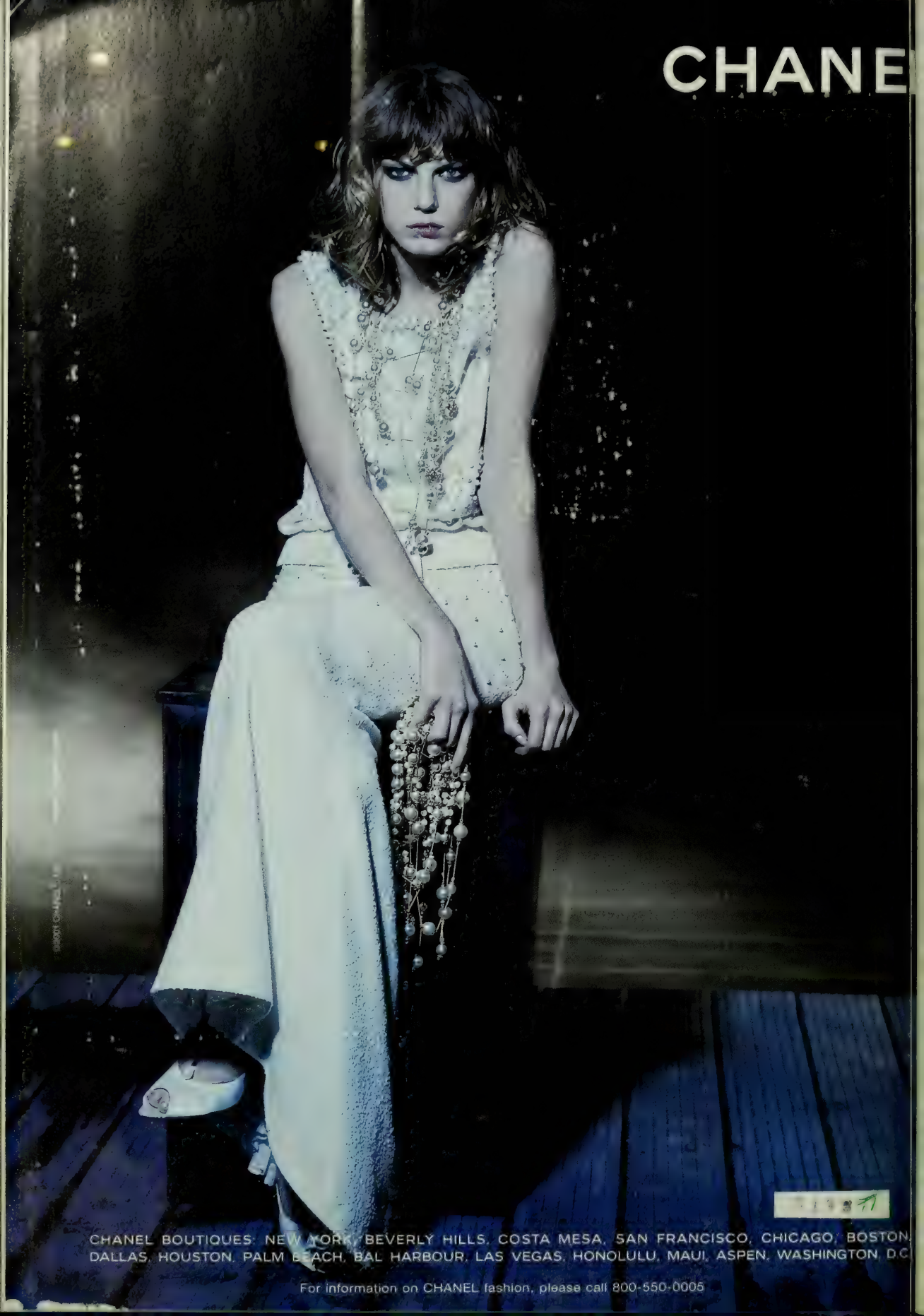
Cole Haan, the Roundabout Theatre Company, and *Vanity Fair* partnered together on Wednesday, February 7, to present a behind-the-scenes look at *Design for Living*, the newest Roundabout Theatre production. Two hundred guests gathered at the Cole Haan store on Madison Avenue for an insider chat with actors Alan Cumming and Dominic West and directors Joe Mantello and Todd Haimes.





Top, left to right: **Joe Mantello, Dominic West, and Todd Haimes of Roundabout Theatre, Matt Rubel and Rick Chilcott of Cole Haan, and Alan Cumming; *Bottom:* Alan Cumming.**





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